JUNE, 1923 VOLUME LVII, NO. 4

THE
BOOKMAN

SEX IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

By Mary Austin

ANYONE who accepts an invitation to write on the subject of sex in American literature is sure, at least, of a definite limitation of the field of comment. He would not be expected, supposing we had an American equivalent for those immortal works, to discuss "Aucassin et Nicolette" or the "Paradiso" of Dante. He would be able to omit all mention of an American "Romeo and Juliet" and need not even think of an "Antony and Cleopatra", though one of these be the supreme drama of young love, and the other the outstanding instance of a world well lost for an infatuation. For sex in the United States is never taken to mean the whole complex of the individual love life. It is quite definitely restricted to a physiological crisis and its immediate reactions, occurring under circumstances sufficiently incriminating to remain reasonably outside the parlor consciousness of the average citizen.

In no way does the American public evince the unsophistication of its sex perceptions so readily as in this general acceptance of the parlor as the determinant of aspects of sex that may, or may not, be treated in fiction. There is practically no limit to the detail with which the eternal encounter of male and female may be discussed, so long as it happens in the parlor or some of its accepted substitutes. It is only when the threshold of the bedroom is crossed that the hackles of American propriety begin to rise.

This idea that there are aspects of the love life which cannot profitably be discussed in public, or at all except under well defined limitations of occasion and participation, is the distinctive characteristic of the Anglo-European culture out of which our American culture took its rise. The further you get away from the narrow strip of modern civilization which incorporated into its social inheritance the best traditions of Greek and Roman life, which projected itself into the great experiments of Christian celibacy and Christian mysticism, which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gave rise to chivalry and to the scientific approach, the further you are from its prevailing separation of sex experiences into those that enlarge the field of spiritual perceptivity, and those which are believed to be limiting and disintegrating. I am doubtful if there is any people on the earth among whom no distinctions are made as to the quality of sex relations, but it is quite certain that the distinctions I have just noted are to be found generally among the peoples who maintain the highest intellectual and constructive cultures of today. For this reason it is impossible to treat the American disposition to designate the acceptable types of personal adventure as "love stories" and the unacceptable as "sex" stories, as the evidence of hypocrisy, or moral bigotry. I may be vastly entertained by our literary distinction between sex and love, but I am bound to bring to its discussion some better founded attitude than the supercilious contempt with which it is too often approached.

The love life of any people is, like its civic life, the evolutionary product of its experience. The creative centres of individual life lie so close together that every great racial or national adventure inevitably modifies both the nature and the extent of the attachments that individuals may form for one another. The test of the value of love life in the race is the potential vigor of the racial continuity, and the test for the value of love in life is the extent to which it enlarges the field of individual perceptivity. The Anglo-European strain, from which issued the earliest American settlement, and by which its ideals are still dominated, had already arrived at perfectly definite conclusions about the kind of love adventure which is spiritually illuminating and therefore racially advantageous, conclusions which the present generation of Americans seems bent upon proving mistaken.

There can be no question, I think, that the love tradition of the Anglo-American strain swings through a wider arc of illumination, touches more and higher planes of consciousness, than the love life of any other socially coordinated group. Into this strain have been incorporated the pagan rhapsodies of knight errantry and the formulas of the laboratory, the lore of Aphrodite and Proserpine, rapture and vision of the saints. It includes in its literary traditions most of the world's great love stories; great, I mean, in their power favorably to affect our own experience.

You will find in these stories more than a broadly spiritual conception of the personal relation. Even in such instances as frankly admit the failure of individuals to attain their ideal, the lapse from it is so handled as to constitute an assoiling breadth of understanding.

This must be kept in mind always, as one of the supreme achievements of the Anglo-European civilization, that it learned early how to make the love life a means of enlarging the borders of its understanding of man and his place in society. This is what Hawthorne managed to do with "The Scarlet Letter", which, though it treats plainly of adultery, fixes the attention of the reader not on the act but on the consequent spiritual adventure of the participants. An even better, because more modern, instance is to be found in that series of books by Maurice Hewlett, "Open Country", "Half-way House", "Rest Harrow", which taken together constitute the highest type of "love story" achieved in our generation. In these books Mr. Hewlett handles young love, courtship, adul-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tery, "free love", and marriage in such a fashion as to represent these things as they may happen today in English society. So faithfully does he present them that they secure to the reader and to the chief characters the utmost of illumination. Mr. Galsworthy in his "Forsyte Saga", though he shows his fellow English as failing of this ideal, sometimes cheaply failing, sometimes tragically, never implicates his readers in the failure. Rather, he puts the reader in the position of electing that ideal for himself.

At the same time we are producing in the United States quantities of fiction in which not only is there no illumination, but there is a disposition to insist on a general state of muddled unsatisfactoriness as the American norm, and to treat any pretense to anything else as sheer hypocrisy or, at the least, a never to be sufficiently condemned residual Puritanism. And if by any quirk of the writer's obligation to record life as it presents itself, a modern American is shown as maintaining the earlier ideal of sex behavior, he is invariably shown as attaining nothing by it but a dreary conformity.

We cannot quite get to the bottom of this state of things by referring it to the young desire to startle by defying the conventions of sex propriety. Nor can it be dismissed as an effort to trade upon the public appetite for salaciousness. For many of the transgressors are not young, and books of this character do not sell at anything like the rate of the commercially "pure" love story. Nor does the complete capitulation of our half baked American intellectualism to the Freudian premise, account for the preoccupation of writers like Sherwood Anderson and Edgar Lee Masters with phases of our national love life so generally unpleasant and uninforming that they go by the name of "sex" stories.

It is much more likely that the prevailing American obsession with psychoanalysis — so much more obsessing than it has been in any other English speaking country — is itself attributable to the schism which appears to exist between the traditional American ideal of love life and the present literary expression of it. Psychoanalyzing the psychoanalysts, one is inclined to say that the easy substitution of the Freudian libido for the personal devil of our forebears is merely the younger generation's way, by putting the responsibility on the Puritans, of excusing itself for finding sex a tormenting and unmanageable business.

The real question is, why does the newer group of writers find sex so tormenting and unmanageable that it is driven to the point of denying that love life ever was or ever could be anything else?

Only by accepting the idea that what the individual is able to experience, or conceive of others as experiencing, is rather strictly limited by the content of the racial inheritance, can we arrive at any conclusion that is not simply denunciatory. The Anglo-American notion of the scope and function of the love life received, as we have seen, contributions from all the great cultures that sprang up on the north shore of the Mediterranean and swept in a northwesterly direction to the American continent. But during the past sixty years the United States has almost ceased to receive anything from that strain. Its chief increments of population have been from eastern and central Europe, from peoples that never arrived at the pagan mysticism of sex, were outside

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Christian mysticism of love, missed the adventure of chivalry and the most refined elements of feudalism, and have only within their youngest generation brought their thinking into line with modern science.

That our Baltic and Slavic stock will have another way than the English of experiencing love, and possibly a more limited way, is inevitable. That the perception on the part of one type of what may be going on in the love life of another type, will stop close to the observer's own capacity to experience, is more than likely. Thus, though much that is written in the United States contradicts the traditional ideal of our dominant strains, it is found on examination to be entirely conformable to fictional presentations of the love life lived in different parts of Europe. All Theodore Dreiser's people love like the peasants in a novel by Bojer or Knut Hamsun. His women have a cowlike complaisance such as can be found only in peoples who have lived for generations close to the soil; his men in their amours resemble those savages who can count five only, on the fingers of one hand. Having used up one set of digits they begin all over on the other hand and count five again. So "the Genius" and "the Financier" pass from Susan to Jane and from Jane to Maria, and so to Edith and Emily, by nearly identical progressions, learning nothing at all and teaching their author very little.

If occasionally one of Dreiser's characters exhibited a more informed approach to the highest type of American love life, one might then suppose that he had chosen to write stories like "Jenny Gerhardt" and "Sister Carrie" for some one of the reprehensible reasons that his critics sometimes credit to him. But the exceedingly narrow range of the multifarious love affairs of Dreiser's people, as well as the restricted outlook of the author's own confessions, admit of no other conclusion than that here is a man of talent, outside the stream of traditional Anglo-American experience, honestly engaged in expressing not only all that he knows, but the limitations of his capacity to know. So far as the evidence of his writing goes, Mr. Dreiser knows no more of the power of the love life to inform and vitalize the whole nature and outlook of man, than the finger counting savage knows of trigonometry. And what is true of Dreiser is also true of a very large contingent of the newer American writers, so that one is continually being surprised among the younger generation not, as they themselves fondly suppose, by the "advanced" nature of their views on sex, but at the quaint, village folk lore antiquity of them.

One can feel reasonably certain that if the chief protagonist in Mr. Hergesheimer's "Cytherea" had been a woman, the author would have guessed that she had come to the time of life when the energy of the reproductive complex tends to seek other, more altruistic, forms of expression. That there is a dangerous age for women is so old a piece of information that Mr. Hergesheimer could reasonably have been counted on to know it. But that there is a dangerous age for men, particularly men with a great deal of leisure and nothing interesting to do in it; and that if his hero, instead of making a fetish of a French doll and running away with another man's wife, had vowed himself to a female saint and founded a school for street urchins, he would have been much more normal as well as American in type, is a kind of knowledge evidently not within Mr. Hergesheimer's inheri-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tance. Or, perhaps, not being of the race that invented female saints, Mr. Hergesheimer would denounce their use in distributing the strains of a shifting equilibrium as abnormal, and find no point of rest for his hero between adultery and dull compliance.

I do not mean to deny that there are thousands of people in the United States whose love life is the sordidly restricted episode it is described as being in books like "Winesburg, Ohio" and "Spoon River Anthology". Or that there are millions whose experience is limited to the turgid, tormenting bounderism suffered in the novels of Waldo Frank and Ben Hecht. There are quite certainly any number of people who, while sedulously cherishing the earlier ideal, fail as completely as do the inhabitants of Zenith City and Gopher Prairie in registering its high mark. But one does not need to accuse any of these authors of anything less than entire honesty in order to prove that there may be more beauty and aspiration in American love life than gets into their books. What one does suspect them of, with the sole exception of Sinclair Lewis, is the nursing of their limitations in this direction under the illusion that it is the advertisement of a superior attitude toward life and society.

Mr. Lewis writes with a photographic fidelity which appears at times not wholly conscious of what it reflects. One wonders if he was fully aware of how much of Carol Kennicott's failure to find herself in Gopher Prairie was owing to the lack of sex potency, a lack which he records without relating it to any other of her insufficiencies. Insufficiency in every one of the centres of personal power, in sex and art and religion, is the note of George Babbitt. Here also Mr. Lewis seems disposed to charge the shortcomings of his hero, as of his heroine, to the social environment, rather than to any incapacity, either native or acquired, to experience art or love or religion with intensity. Mr. Lewis does not seem to know anything about the relationship of sex potency to the thin muddiness of social perception which he so ruthlessly exposes, but we must be grateful to him for leaving his Americans empty as he found them. He at least never stuffs them with the findings of the neuropathic clinic.

Probably Sinclair Lewis is more nearly right than any of our young men writers about the love life of the average middle class American. It is thin rather than vicious. I am as skeptical of the turgid nastiness which the psychoanalytic writers find below the level of American consciousness, as I am doubtful that the monumental repressions of the Puritans are responsible for it. Why assume that they had so much to repress? Long before they came to New England they ceased to need or to find pleasure in ritual and symbol or any representative art; their religious mysticism was reduced to a pale phosphorescence of renunciation. The latter progression of their stock has been toward sterility, intellectual as well as physical. What one suspects is that the average Puritan under his skin was not unlike George Babbitt, with this advantage over George that he was still able to get some warmth out of denouncing the things that no longer warmed him in any other fashion. Poor George didn't even have anything heartily to hate.

One cannot escape the suggestion that much of the present insistence on Puritanism as the prevailing influence in American love life comes from the Slavonic and Semitic elements in our

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intellectual life. Neither the Russian nor the Jew has ever been able to understand that Puritanism may have been a way of escape; or that not to have had any seriously upsetting sex adventures may be the end of an intelligently achieved life standard. The avidity with which the Jewish intellectual in particular has seized upon psychoanalysis emphasizes a need of proving that everybody is as full of secret troubling as himself, a need which could easily arise out of a lack of that intensity of experience it undertakes to demonstrate. Probably the difficulty of the Jew has been his too early espousal of a One God who had very little interest in the human impulses of his Chosen People. The Greek, likewise the Roman, had gods to whom he could dedicate his every member; he sunned his most obscure impulses on a thousand altars until the residue, in spite of what we know of the institutions by which it was expressed, smells fairly sweet. But the Jew had only the one altar, upon which he bargained chiefly for his racial continuity. He made a fetish of multiplying because there were no gardens of Aphrodite in which his seed could be sown without reproach. If occasionally he could be found hankering for the altars of Astoreth, there was always one of his prophets waving him back with the most terrifying of denunciations, until at last there are no altars left but those prepared for us by the modern press. So there may well be shut up in the Semitic heart old lees of untasted wine, fermenting acidly.

Sometimes I suspect that this engagement of the love interest with the secret forces of the dark only appears to be Semitic because here in the United States we are for the moment confronted with Semitized examples of it. Always the subconsciousness of the dark-whites, whose first appearance in history was around the northeastern shore of the Mediterranean, was charged with intimations of dreadfulness which worked to the surface of their lives in obscene and cruel rites, in concepts of everlasting hell and gods of vengeance. Now this dark-white strain has so mixed with all European peoples that it cannot always be traced by blood or political relationships. But the present literature of sex which most offends the Anglo-American strain falls readily into two categories: the intricate, tormented type of which D. H. Lawrence is an outstanding example, and the type of earthbound intensity of Sherwood Anderson's blond-white middle westerners. Partaking of both these strains, but definitely disengaging itself from the limitations of both, there is a progressive adventure which has been variously treated by the best English novelists but has, for the moment, no recognized prophet in the United States.

Nor, in the present state of literary criticism in this country, does it seem likely that the forward movement of American love life will be widely discerned, even though to people like myself it appears already to have developed a sense of direction. For some time it is likely to be obscured by the efflorescence in our literature of the submerged European strains, both dark and blond.

Then there is the Slav to hear from, who has not even made a beginning of discrimination between the facts of sex life and what he feels about them. The only thing that the Slavic temperament is certain of is that it wants all its emotional reactions to wallow in at the same time, it wants all the things that the Anglo-American has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gained by denying some of them. The Negroes have not yet begun to write love stories, nor our recently incorporated oriental factors. That which they may yet bring to light of the interior processes of the love life may prove as astonishing as it will be valuable.

It is the authorized presence in our American life of all these contradictory and often mutually exclusive strains of experience that is the source of that muddled stream of sex literature, over which all contributors to it seem to be equally exercised. It appears to be easier to understand another man's religion, his politics, or his philosophy than to enter into his love life when it proceeds from a widely differing social inheritance. At any rate, our various contributing elements seem to be always in a state of mind toward one another's revelations more denunciatory than inquiring.

Much of what is objectionable in recent fiction is of the sort that little boys chalk up on barn doors for other little boys to whisper and nudge about. It might get us forward a bit faster if there were fewer journals of literary comment so willing to become the barn doors of the current generation. But it is also indispensable to a growing society that there should always be little boys coming along able to be freshly struck with immemorial vulgarities and at the same time possessed of the normal instinct for getting them out of the system with a piece of chalk. The one really abnormal and unbearable person is the adult who prowls about looking for barn doors to froth over.

Of the women novelists Willa Cather gives the best evidence of comprehending the range of sex experience which our varied American makeup offers to the novelist's hand. Though her extraordinary intuition penetrates to the slow, ashen heat of the peasant heart, it also takes in, on the other side, extensions of the love adventure into regions untrodden by most of our men novelists.

It is worth noting that every one of the eight or ten women novelists in America who might be quickly named is of the earlier Anglo-European stock. Which may account for their preference for the more intellectualized and highly elucidated love adventure, pushed occasionally into regions of spiritual clarity that constitute a real "advance" in the love life of the race. I have in mind that cool touch by which the traditionally happy marriage of "The Brimming Cup" is saved from a suspicion of overripeness, the ability of the husband to remain detached from his wife's projected excursion into infidelity and to refrain from any of the traditional male compulsions of her affections. One has hopes of yet seeing a story in which a wife, refusing to "hold" her husband, successfully enforces her demand that he hold himself. And now, here is Gertrude Atherton with a novel in which is shown a mature woman who, with sufficient beauty to "hold" a much younger man, frankly rejects him in favor of the community of achievement offered her by an older and less romantically stimulative man. Mrs. Atherton makes her point with far too much precision not to know what she refrains from saying: that the whole institution of marriage is built up out of this subconscious conviction of women that the common life of husband and wife, what they may achieve by way of offspring, by conquest of the maternal environment, or on the plane of perceptive consciousness, is more important than what they feel for one another. Two years ago

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I tried a novel myself in which the woman of the story undertook to persuade a man that he ought to bring his love life into line with his own demand for equity in the fields of economics and politics, but the result proved that there is still a great deal of work to be done among the critics of literature in persuading them that uncovering concealed nastiness is not the only way of being "advanced" in writing about sex.

In the United States, literary criticism is chiefly the province of young, even very young, men. Criticism and reviewing are the usual resort of the foreign or foreignly derived writer, while he is acquiring that detailed familiarity with American life which is demanded by creative literature. It is to this that we must attribute the overemphasis of the imperfectly Americanized treatment of sex in fiction, and the neglect of the broader sociological and more humanly generalized treatment of it by an equal number of equally competent novelists.

In all this concert of voices a place must not be denied to those who honestly fear that the Anglo-American ideal of love life may be asphyxiated in the fumes of half assimilated and fermenting racial contributions. There is no doubt that the confused and contradictory concepts of how the love life should be conducted, has had much to do with upsetting the Anglo-European ideal of indissoluble marriage, and promoting the American practice of easy divorce. But there is a factor at work, shaping our every expression of the value of love in life, that cries aloud from every form of criticism of American culture: a factor playing against the older ideal and on the side of the less experienced elements of our population, which I do not recall anywhere to have seen noted. This is the general failure of communication on the subject between young men and mature women.

In nearly everything that gets printed in the United States there is a marked absence of a certain kind of knowledge which is the sum of woman's age long preoccupation with the practice of loving. One observes our young men essayists trying to ensnare this personal lore in nets woven clumsily of quotations from Frazer, Jung, and Havelock Ellis, with all their conclusions falling into the interstices.

Curiously, although we are exceedingly frank talkers in the United States on what might be called the static aspects of sex life — physiology, hygiene, and economics — all its experiential lore is hedged about with conversational inhibitions, the most daunting of which is the convention that bars informing intimacies between young men and older women. In more primitive societies it is the social function of mature women to mediate between the young men and the older, as it is the business of young women to bear children until, by virtue of their experience as mothers of men, they join the ranks of mediators and advisers. Something of this function the mature woman still retains in European and Asiatic society. The French or Italian mother not only advises her son in the selection of a wife, but she is not infrequently his confidante in matters which it is the dutiful business of the American son to prevent his mother from suspecting. The effect on the resulting literatures of the personal life is outstanding. Balzac is full of this experiential lore, Meredith has more than a little, Hardy brings up double handfuls of it from the hearts of English country women; but we have no man novelist in America who

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dares to concern himself very intimately with the love life of any but extremely young women. Our young men are, as a matter of fact, a little inclined to be shocked at the notion that a woman who has reached the years in which she is definitely recognized as "older" has any love life which should intimately concern them, or, in view of the general refusal of the mature American woman to use her knowledge for the purpose of creating sex "situations", that she has any knowledge that needs to be taken into consideration. Well, where do you suppose it went, all the lore of Aphrodite and Proserpine, all the intricate, heart piercing illumination of the cloisters, all that was thought and suffered by the queens of love and beauty and the fair ladies pining in bowers while their husbands and lovers were proving the quality of those same ladies' charms by sticking paynims and restoring ravished virgins to their homes?

What do you suppose the wives of American pioneers were thinking about as they trecked across the continent behind their husbands? Where do you suppose the unmarried English and American women novelists — who are the only novelists ranking close to the greatest men novelists of the world — inform themselves, except out of the inexhaustible storehouse of woman lore, lore chiefly about men's ways with women, which, in America, social use has rendered incommunicable.

This failure of communication on the most important issues of the personal life has social and sociological implications that tempt the essayist. In the literature of American love life, these implications easily account for the widely observed disposition to make young love the prevailing theme of American fiction. The American novelist very early acquires the habit of not thinking of mature women in connection with personal romance, and settles quickly into incapacity for knowing anything beyond what very young women teach him. This, plus the fact that our stage and our moving pictures are almost wholly under the direction of men whose racial experience is outside and far short of the best Anglo-American tradition, seems to me to cover most of the ground of the just complaint that American fiction, written or played, is thin, immature, and of a slightly clinical flavor. If I had anything to recommend for its betterment it would certainly not be suppression, but a readier and clearer recognition of the inequalities of our national inheritance and the establishment of a more effective communicability on the subject of its spiritual progressions.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YIDDISH LITERATURE, AND THE CASE OF SHOLOM ASCH

By Herbert S. Gorman

With a Drawing from Life by Ivan Opffer

YIDDISH literature is quite distinct from and more than a mere branch of that great flood of Hebrew writings that dates from the Old Testament and the Talmud. Although the first recognizable Hebrew book printed in this country ("Abne Joshua", New York, 1860) dates from the beginning of the Civil War, one must skip to the 'eighties before Yiddish letters proper make their appearance here. Then the writers, in a majority of cases lyric poets, spring up in abundance. It is no part of an article treating a single contemporary figure to do more than mention the beginnings of Yiddish letters and indicate briefly the authors who stand out as preeminent and lead directly to Sholom Asch. Three men who precede Asch, both chronologically and in the development of certain genres, should be noted, for it was mainly by their efforts that Yiddish prose grew into so admirable a reservoir of literary treasure. Sholom Abramovitch, known among his own people as "the Jewish Cervantes", may be regarded as the first complete fruition of the distinguished Yiddish writer, although he was born as late as 1836. Following him is Isaac Lob Peretz (born in 1851) whose tales and poems are still eagerly read. The third writer is Shalom Aleichem (Sholom Rabinovitch) who is possibly the best known of the older Yiddish writers to English readers. These men pictured Jewish life with humor and a keen sense of reality, a heritage that is being splendidly carried on today by Sholom Asch.

A group of younger people, comparatively speaking, grew up under the influence of these men and have, in many cases, already made a definitive impress on Yiddish letters. Among them may be noted Abraham Reisen, Morris Rosenfeld, "Yehoash" (Solomon Bloomgarden), "Schomer" (Nahum Meyer Schaikewitz), Jacob Gordin, Leon Kobrin, Moishe Nadir, David Pinski, Abraham Cahan, and "Tashrak" (Israel J. Levin). These names are picked almost at random and one is embarrassed at the names left out. The soil is exceedingly rich and no attempt has been made by the writer to cover it with any degree of adequacy. It is with Sholom Asch particularly that this article has to deal.

When Moishe Nadir affirmed that Sholom Asch possessed the holiday spirit I misinterpreted him and wondered how Nadir, a Yiddish writer who must be accepted with all seriousness by anyone attempting to grasp the hugeness and quality of the Jewish literary output in America, could ascribe such a spirit to the author of "The God of Vengeance", "Mottke, the Vagabond", and "Uncle Moses".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sholom Asch

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rather did I find an ache in these books, the insistent voice of a coherent Jewish nationality manifesting itself in the face of a thousand obstacles. It was only after I had met and talked with Sholom Asch that I understood the deepness of Nadir's analysis. He meant that Asch possessed to a high degree the Jewish religious holiday spirit. Throughout his work, unfortunately so inaccessible in English, is to be found that fervor which foreign lands may not weaken, that pride untempered by reason and yet so admirable, that delight in the unity of the Jew all over the world. He is proud of the Jew as a Jew. And in the long annals of the Jews' obstinate persistence to retain their identity and not be devoured by the races that literally engulfed them, he finds much of his inspiration.

"It is the spirit of the Jewish faith kept alive throughout the ages", cries Asch, his face lighting up and his hands eagerly gesticulating, "that I must describe."

My first meeting with him was in the news room of the New York Jewish daily, the "Forward". Later we repaired to a small restaurant but a few doors from noisy, picturesque East Broadway where the Yiddish newspapers are huddled so closely together. One trait, thoroughly European, is possessed by the Jewish litterateurs. They love to foregather in a common place, to meet and mingle constantly with one another. It is the clique spirit of writers, so familiar to Paris and so alien to the more diffident self-consciousness of the Anglo-Saxon. The conversation is not particularly about books or work to be done. It represents rather a relaxation of mood. It is the atmosphere (poor overworked word!) which counts, that invigorating sense that the men sitting about are intellectual workers. There is incentive in this, a sensation that one must earn his right to mingle familiarly with this gathering. Perhaps herein lies one reason why the Yiddish writers are so everlastingly immersed in their projects, so set upon achievement. A bohemian note creeps in, although it is rather diluted by the glasses of astoundingly hot tea that compose the solitary liquid refreshment. Legend has it that the café where these men formerly met went out of business because the writers came there, sat all afternoon over one or two glasses of tea, and then went away leaving the aggrieved proprietor with an empty cash register. I doubt the wrath of the proprietor, though, for I well remember being in a Jewish restaurant with one or two writers and noting that the owner effusively refused any payment whatsoever. This, I was earnestly informed by Konrad Bercovici, however, was an exception.

Sholom Asch was generally to be found in the café I have strayed so far from, at the luncheon hour. He is a rather large man, tall and of substantial build. His prominent nose and small, neatly cropped mustache suggest the typical business man rather than the sensitive writer of novels and plays. It is when his face lights up — and he smiles often and most agreeably albeit a bit shyly — that his features take on an intellectual aspect. His shyness is somewhat accentuated by the care he takes in selecting his English words. One must grasp at half finished sentences to follow him with any degree of success.

The fact that this man is famous among millions of Jews is surprising when we take into consideration his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

age. Asch was born in Kutno, Poland, in 1880. Until he was sixteen or eighteen years old he lived quietly at home, studying all the while. We may guess that he was a bright boy at *cheder*, for his Jewish national sense has been an integral part of him since he could first comprehend it. Hebrew, as a study, was one of his first loves and he has never forsaken it. Today he has to his credit a number of books in Hebrew as well as his more substantial successes in Yiddish. In an era when Hebrew is no more than a language of culture and Yiddish is the spoken tongue of a large portion of the people, this familiarity with the classic form is not so common as it may seem. Hebrew today appears to be assuming that place that Latin occupied in early church history. Most of the contemporary literature of the Jew is written in Yiddish, and we may guess that forty or fifty years ago the beginnings of a national literature in this tongue were not without opposition. It appears to be the old tale of writers eventually adopting the vulgar language of the masses in order to bring their works into the common home. All countries (except those as young as the United States) have passed through this phase. And even this country is building up a new and refreshing variant of the English language that would amaze Thackeray and Dickens. The tragedy of the Jew, however, appears to be that Yiddish is unstable and is already passing out. The young Jews speak the language of the country wherein they reach maturity. There are even pessimistic prophets among the Jews who assert that it will not be long before Yiddish goes the way of Hebrew and becomes the spoken tongue of a pitifully small minority.

In addition to acquiring Hebrew Asch became a student of German. When he was about eighteen years old he went to live in Warsaw. Undoubtedly, during those early years there he observed and put away much of the material for "Mottke, the Vagabond". It was in Warsaw that he began to write. The short story, the sketch, first absorbed his attention. He felt that through this medium he could best give the multitude of thoughts and moods that were seething in him. Always he has been a close observer of his own people, and his work is, from first to last, essentially realistic. As a young man he was visibly influenced by the writings of Peretz. When he was twenty-one years old he started in quite seriously to carve out a literary career for himself. He wrote numberless short stories, and, due to the perspicacity of Abraham Cahan, his work began to appear in Yiddish journals in America. It is now fifteen years since Cahan began to print the stories of Asch in the "Jewish Morning Journal". Of course other papers followed suit, for editors had but to read his work to realize his value.

During his life Asch has traveled a great deal. Living in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and France has given him an international perspective and a scale of critical evaluations that are immeasurably worth while. He knows the best literature of all countries, for he has been an assiduous reader as well as a writer. It is to be expected that one of his prime favorites is Dostoyevsky, for what Jew is there who has not grown in intellectual stature under the shadow of this tremendous Russian? Bringing Asch into close touch with the various countries is the fact that many of his books have been translated into Russian and German and French. Shortly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before the war he came to America, and during the past five or six years he has grown to love the United States. His work has taken on a new color from his contemporary atmosphere, and his novel "Uncle Moses" is a direct result of his observations of the Jew in this country and in New York in particular. Living on Staten Island with his wife and children, he is somewhat removed from the hurlyburly of the metropolis, but his work for the "Forward", in which paper most of his novels are serialized, brings him almost daily into those literary circles of the lower East Side.

It is, perhaps, of interest briefly to point out his more important works in Yiddish and then to turn to those translations that give us an exceptionally definite idea of the merits of Asch. He has told me that he desired most strongly to have "Mary", a novel written in 1910, translated because he considered it his biggest work. But the action of "Mary" is not laid in America, and his publisher considered that "Uncle Moses", with its entire scene in New York, would prove more acceptable to English readers. "Mary" is the story of the movements and activities of the young Jews in Russia during the revolutionary period starting in 1905. Asch has tried to crystallize in this book the aspirations of the young progressive Jew and to define clearly his prominent place in revolutionary propaganda.

Two novels by Asch which are of extreme interest are based upon the historical battles of the Jews for their faith. This is a subject upon which Asch never fails to grow enthusiastic, and it is natural that he should turn to Jewish history for documents upon which to work and express his inner feelings. One of these books, "The Sacrifice for His Holy Name", was written in direct emulation of other writers. The action takes place in about 1650 and principally in Poland. Asch had in mind while he wrote the work of Nicholas Gogol, the Russian writer, and that of the Pole, Henryk Sienkiewicz. Gogol had given the side of the Cossacks during the religious and national upheavals of the seventeenth century in Central Europe in his "Taras Bulba". Sienkiewicz, in his trilogy "With Fire and Sword", "The Deluge", and "Pan Michael", had done the same thing for the Poles. It was Asch's idea to write the Jewish side of this period: "The Sacrifice for His Holy Name" is the result.

The other historical novel, which was published serially in the "Forward", is called "The Witch of Castile". The scene is laid during the papacy of Paul the Fourth in Rome and depicts the fight of the Jews for their religion under that pitiless ruler. Asch has tried to give a minute picture of the Renaissance Ghetto of the Jews in Rome, probably the first great Ghetto that the Jews ever established. It is a surprising fact, by the way, that this Ghetto formed by Paul the Fourth in the sixteenth century was abolished only with the triumph of King Victor Emmanuel in 1870.

Two plays by Asch, untranslated as yet, may be mentioned before his more available works are treated. One of these, "The Dance of Death", is based directly upon the Great War in Europe. Another play is based upon a Biblical theme and is called "The Two Children". The story is that of Amnon and Tamar, the children of David, and of their incestuous love for each other. It may be found in the Second Book of Kings, chapter thirteen. The theme is hardly one that could be produced in an English speaking theatre; but those who have read

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it in the original are unanimous in declaring it an exceptionally delicate and beautiful piece of work.

If we except a number of sketches, several one act plays of which "Night" is the most prominent, a book of essays called "America", now out of print and difficult to procure, the fame of Sholom Asch can manifest itself to English readers only through two novels and a single play. Both of these novels are distinguished in quality although they possess flaws, and the play was sufficiently important to achieve production by Reinhardt in his Berlin theatre.

The first novel by Sholom Asch to be translated into English was "Mottke, the Vagabond", which was brought out a number of years ago. "Gonef", the word from which "Vagabond" is fashioned in the title, literally means a gangster. Mottke is the child of misfortune, a thief who runs wild from his earliest youth, is terribly beaten and abused, and becomes the natural enemy of those in authority. The first six chapters of the book, describing the early boyhood of Mottke, are superbly written; and the character under clever handling shapes itself consistently and in high literary fashion for the reader. After that the book, which was written as a serial, grows erratic and almost picaresque in quality. Mottke runs away with a traveling troupe of entertainers who develop him into a wrestler. He continues his thieving proclivities, has a love affair with a half wild creature who is a tightrope walker with the troupe, and eventually murders her lover. Arriving in Warsaw, Mottke mingles with the dregs of society. The book becomes a horrible description of the very lowest forms of life. But strangely enough it holds the reader, for flashing through the sordidness and emphatic insistence upon gross reality are frequent bursts of beauty, lyrical interludes that remain in the memory. One feels that Mottke is the victim of adverse circumstances. He is a primitive creature, swayed by passions, and wholly oblivious to the endless shibboleths of civilized communities; at the same time fate is always against him. He is a criminal but he is a dreamer as well. The vivid qualities of this novel have undoubtedly been strengthened by the careful study of underground Warsaw and life among the poorer classes of Jews in Poland. It is a painful book but it is a sincere book, also.

"Uncle Moses", written but a few years ago, is in quite another vein. There is sordidness here of a sort but there is no degeneracy. The idea that occasioned the book, according to Asch, was a true happening. Uncle Moses is a Polish Jew who comes to America, eventually establishes a sweatshop on the Bowery, and then sends back to his native village for workers. At home he was but a poor hanger on; in America he is a power to be reckoned with. Small group by small group, he brings over the people of his native village, and it is not long before he has practically all of them, mayor, merchant, and miller, at work in his unsanitary slave driven shop. Although he is well in his maturity and involved in affairs with various women, he violently desires the daughter of one of his workers. The girl, almost a child, is forced into marriage by avaricious parents who see in the union an easy living for themselves. Then follows a remarkable psychological exposition of the degeneration of Uncle Moses from the once proud sweatshop owner to a vagabond. Almost pitiful in his at-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tempts to win the affection of the woman he married against her will, Uncle Moses forsakes his business, his assistant cleverly steals it, and the mark of fate is set on the perplexed man. Asch has done an exceptionally fine piece of work in this novel. His characterizations are the result of more than meticulous observation. He breathes souls, sometimes tormented, into them. And the book, as a whole, becomes a valuable picture of certain aspects of Jewish life in New York.

"The God of Vengeance", Asch's one full length play to be translated, was revived a short time ago at the Jewish Art Theatre in New York, and is at the moment the subject of court litigation as a result of its production in English at a Broadway theatre. Its theme is such as only a continental writer could handle. The reader is given the spectacle of a man bringing up his daughter in dewy innocence and having a Holy Scroll carefully copied out for her while he runs a brothel in the cellar beneath his house. One must understand a bit of the Jewish religion to perceive the importance of the Holy Scroll. This document is the first five books of the Old Testament, beginning with Genesis, carefully written out by a scribe on vellum. Such a task sometimes takes years and costs an immense amount of money. It is almost as important an achievement to a religious Jew as a pilgrimage to Mecca is to a Mohammedan. The Holy Scroll when completed is given to a synagogue in the name of someone. In the case of "The God of Vengeance" this scroll is to be presented in the name of the daughter. The girl, however, gets downstairs into the brothel before the presentation, and the sins of the father are visited upon the head of the child. Vengeance is directed at the maddened brothel keeper through the destruction of the child's innocence. The play is tragic in quality and over it hover the dark wings of impending fate.

These three books are sufficient to intimate rather well the qualities of Sholom Asch as a writer. The Jewish religion is an overwhelming part of his inspiration always. It is because he writes so well about Jews and knows their hearts so clearly, their famished desires and indestructible dreams, that he has become so important to them in any consideration of their contemporary literature. He is untamed at moments in a literary way, and sometimes loses that fine restraint that is so much a part of authentic achievement; but he is indubitably a born story teller, the chief requisite of a Jewish writer if he is to be popular among his own people.

In the prime of life as he is, a vast field stretches before him. The fact that already three of his books have been translated into English would seem to show that he is to emerge from that world of letters bounded by Second Avenue and stretching eastward that is so content with its own language and its own achievement. The Jew in English letters is far from a rarity, but the Jew as a writer among his own people is a thing of which we are altogether too ignorant. It is time to point out that a fully matured literature has sprung up within forty years, that it consists of remarkable novels, exceptional plays, acute spiritual and literary diagnoses, and beautiful poetry. And it may also be apropos to observe that Sholom Asch is read all over the world and that it is time for him to be discovered by the country in which he lives.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EMERSON, THE RADICAL

By Thomas L. Masson

ON May 25 occurs the one hundred and twentieth anniversary of Emerson's birth. He was apparently the first American preacher of any consequence to break loose from ecclesiastical traditions. He split with his congregation, not on account of any belief or disbelief in the divinity of Christ so much as on account of the communion service. But his great point was that he felt obliged to go it alone. In his famous sermon before Harvard he says: "Let me admonish you, first of all, to go alone; to refuse the good models, even those which are sacred in the imagination of men, and dare to love God without mediator or veil."

In the sermon to his congregation in which he bade them farewell, he said, in speaking of the communion service: "I have therefore been compelled to consider whether it becomes me to administer it. I am clearly of the opinion that I ought not to. . . . It is my desire, in the office of a Christian minister, to do nothing which I cannot do with my whole heart. Having said this, I have said all."

This sermon was preached on the ninth of September, 1832. Nearly a century before, Jonathan Edwards, quite properly termed one of the ablest men this country has produced, was practically thrown out of his church at Northampton because of his refusal to administer the sacrament to those who had not formally joined the church.

Since Emerson's time there has been a quite respectable line of so called heretics, or men who have felt called upon to mark out individual lines of their own. In some cases they have been formally tried and dismissed. In others they have not. They include the Reverend C. E. Cheney of Christ Church, Chicago (deposed); Doctor A. S. Crapsey, Episcopal rector of Rochester, New York (deposed); and Doctor C. A. Briggs, Presbyterian, who after a famous trial was suspended and afterward joined the Episcopal church.

Emerson was an optimist. If such mild reproaches as Paul Elmer More fastens upon him can be called reproaches at all, he was more of an optimist than life warranted. Perhaps there is a disposition to impress upon us the fact that this characteristic weakened his subsequent influence. Eliot Norton quotes Carlyle as saying: "There seems a great contrast between Emerson and myself. He seems verra content with life, and takes much satisfaction in the world, especially in your country. One would suppose to hear him that ye had no troubles there, and no share in the darkness that hangs over these old lands."

That, surely, is very modern and is in much the vein, imposed upon us today, of certain European critics of America. Mr. More himself, in writing of Emerson's dualism, remarks that "he certainly recognizes the double nature of experience, but it is a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fair question whether he realizes its full meaning and fateful seriousness. He accepts it a trifle too jauntily."

Stuart P. Sherman, in his recent highly intelligent estimate of Emerson ("Americans"), makes of his optimism something more than jauntiness, and invests him with the robe of the new freedom. He declares that "it is not yet adequately recognized to what extent Emerson anticipated not only Whitman but also the poets of the present hour." Previous to this Mr. Sherman remarks that "religious emancipation as conducted by Emerson makes a man not less but more religious."

What we should seek to do at the present moment is to discover, if possible, not the difference between Emerson and Percy Grant so far as the technicalities of their respective beliefs are concerned, but whether, on the whole, we are gaining anything. Macaulay declares in his essay on von Ranke:

"We often hear it said that the world is constantly becoming more and more enlightened, and that this enlightening must be favorable to Protestantism and unfavorable to Catholicism. We wish that we could think so. But we see great reason to doubt whether this be a well founded expectation." He goes on to declare that although during the past two hundred and fifty years the human mind has been in the highest degree active, "Protestantism has made no active conquests to speak of." What would he say now, if he could read the recent sermon of defiance of the Reverend Percy Grant, not to mention others?

There is this, however, to be stated in answer to Macaulay. While what we term man's progress must of necessity be material and mental, and in this sense purely physical and physiological, what he knows or feels about God, in the very nature of things, must remain static. We can never transcend experience, because the terms whereby we express ourselves grow out of our experience. Take for example what the mystics call illuminations or the spiritualists call manifestations or the spiritual healers call realizations. While these things may be true for those who believe in them, there is no way in which they can be made true for all, because no terms exist to explain them. Spiritual development, therefore, is an individual matter.

Emerson's influence over the present generation can scarcely be overestimated. Not only was he the precursor of Whitman and other moderns, but he was the precursor of a great deal of our present inspirational writing. Without prejudice or disrespect, we may say that Emerson's essay on spiritual laws is the beginning of the religious optimism of Mary Baker Eddy. And from these sources and others has sprung a literature which denies the reality of pain, and affirms that it is man's glorious privilege to be the spiritual monarch of all that he surveys.

The question as to how far an individual is warranted in breaking away from authority and marking out a path for himself, is one which must always be very difficult to decide, because it involves the relationship of the individual to his environment. Edwards was repudiated by his congregation. Emerson voluntarily resigned. Grant has taken the ground, apparently, that his duty lies in reforming inside the lines; and this attitude cannot necessarily be dismissed as insincere or based on wrong motives. The fact is that this is a militant age.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Most of us are ready to fight for something, at the drop of the hat. It may be for rationalism or rouge or tobacco. All of which seems to be the natural revolt of the individual against too much censorship, or paternalism, if you will.

And it is precisely this confusion, or this dualism, that it is worth while for us to reflect upon, because it involves the two great counter currents of the present age. Each one of us is passionately desirous of keeping his identity, due largely perhaps to a kind of revulsion from the war, in which we gave up all that we had. Now we come back and assert ourselves, and our separate ownership of the universe. Humility was never a drug on the market, but certainly at present it is not overshadowing us.

It does seem to the present writer that we can now well afford, at this anniversary time of Emerson, to study him anew and more closely in the light of our modern thought. If we do, we shall find that his thought goes much deeper than a surface optimism. It is linked up with some of the finer non-resistant moments of Tolstoy, and — doubtless because Emerson had absorbed so much of universal religion — goes back to the Vedic mysticism and the early Chinese. Its principles are linked up also with the intensely modern affirmation, namely, that each one of us is but the reflection of the cosmic mind. And it may not be inappropriate to end this somewhat discursive paper with a quotation from "The Wisdom of the Hindoos", a delightful book recently issued:

> Many imagine that if we eliminate personality and the love of it out of our life nothing will remain. They imagine that there is no life without personality. But this seems so only to people who have never experienced the joys of self-renunciation. Eliminate personality from life, renounce it and that will remain which forms the substance of life-love which yields positive happiness.
>
> The more man recognizes his spiritual "I" and the more he renounces his material personality, the more truly he understands himself.

This statement will doubtless have its critics among those gentlemen who so obligingly offer correspondence courses in how to develop your personality, yet it cannot be dismissed with impunity by anyone who starts out upon the devious path to ultimate truth.

LANDSCAPE

By Kathryn White Ryan

ROOFS stretching away like farms
Until the city fades
Beyond the slim dropped eagle feather
Of the Palisades.
Black stubble of crowds — blown leaves —
Beneath tall stalks of stone in sheaves.
Quick pigeons, slow gulls, like flies near an ox
Or bees over hollyhocks.

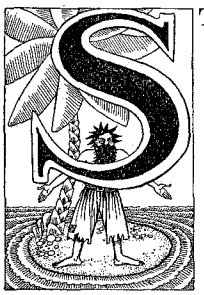
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PARODY OUTLINE OF LITERATURE

VII: ENOCH ARDEN*

By Ring W. Lardner

Illustrated by Herb Roth



TOP me if you've heard this one. It seems they was two Irishmen, Enoch and Philip, and they was both stuck on the same gal Annie and when they was little they use to all three of them play together along the beach and the two Irishmen would take turns having petting parties with their girl friend. Wile her and Enoch was spooning, why Philip would walk up and down the shore gathering beach nuts and vice versa.

They had a cave where they use to play house. One day Annie would pretend like she was Mrs. Arden and the next day she would be Mrs. Ray. She didn't seem to give a d—m and was just out for a good time.

Well, Philip's old man had a bbl. of money whereas Enoch's family was always flat and lived on fish. They never had to clean the fish because as they said the waves had washed them up. But on the other hand Enoch was one of these here red he-blooded boys that even when he was going to kindergarten he had to shave twice a day, and as for Philip, he sung in church Sundays with two basses and an alto and everybody thought it was a mixed quartette.

So anyway when they growed up Annie got stuck on the tough guy and one day all the young people in the town went out in the woods after poison ivy and Enoch and Annie lugged behind and Annie asked him would she be his bride. Philip come up just in time to catch them holding hands on a decayed whistleberry stump. Philip was never so upset in his life. He felt just horrible. He run down to the main street and drunk two coca colas, one on top of the other.

But maybe you've heard this. Well, it was give out that Enoch and Annie was going to get married and Enoch pared his nails for the first time with an oyster knife and they got married and in the next seven years they had a couple of kids, one of them a boy with a beard. I forgot to tell you that in the meantime, Enoch had boughten himself a complete outfit from the South Bend Bait Company and had became a full fledge fisherman and it wasn't nothing for him to come home at night with a string of chuckle headed porgy and maybe a couple of eel. What him and Annie and the kids couldn't eat, why he sold them as antiques and sometimes got even more than they was worth. So all and all Annie didn't have nothing to complain

**As rewritten from Tennyson's classic in the style of Mr. Lardner's "You Know Me Al", etc. This is the seventh instalment of the series in which various American authors, using well known tales, attempt to parody themselves.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"This one chased Enoch up a tree"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about, which is pretty tough for a woman.

But the luck is bound to break the other way sooner or later and finally Enoch went out fishing one day and got a hold of a fleamouthed wardee which they's no gamier fish. It plays havioc with the hardiest nimrod. This one chased Enoch up a tree, took hook, bait and sinker, and went away laughing. In getting down out of the tree Enoch fell the last four flights and broke what D. H. Lawrence would call a loin. Enoch had to give up fishing as you can't fish without a loin. What to do?

Well, they was a big boat going to China who he knew the captain and he figured that maybe he could go over there and run a laundry a wile and save up enough Chinese lires to make he and Annie comfortable the rest of their life. But they wasn't enough fish left for Annie to live on all the time he was gone, so he spent his last few dollars setting her up in a small cracker crumb store. Annie pretty near cried when it come time for him to leave. Don't worry Annie he said I will surely come back. That is just what she was afraid of.

Well, to make a short story out of a very long poem, Enoch went away on his Chinese honeymoon and when he had been away ten years and not even a postcard, why Annie begin to think that maybe he was stewed or something. The cracker crumb store wasn't in no danger of being bought up by the piggly wiggly and the food was so scarce in the Arden home that all but one rat moved to the neighbors and when the Arden kids was on their way to school and back, the spectators would say hello Charley not thinking they could be more than one.

So Philip, who by this time had win a Phi Beta skeleton key at Radcliffe, began snooping around the Arden menage and kept offering to help Annie out but she says I won't take no money from a man. Who made that charge Philip asked her. Finally he said would she do the right thing and marry him and she says no, because it was only ten years since Enoch had went away and the statue of limitations wouldn't be up for another year. Wait one more year says Annie.

Come eleven says Philip.

So eleven finally come and they got married and another little child was born but where was Enoch all this time you will ask. Well, his ship got floundered on some floating arbutus and it was women and children first, so the next thing you know all hands was lost except Enoch and two shipmates, Yo and Ho, and they was cast up on a desert isle. Tennyson tells me that Yo soon died of flu and Ho of sunstroke, but personally I wouldn't be surprised if they didn't make pretty fair eating. Anyway, when they was gone Enoch lived on twigs and when he got real hungry he took a bough.

Now according to the records, during the ten odd years that Enoch spent on the island he didn't do nothing between meals only walk up and down the beach looking for a sail. Nobody seems to know what he was going to do with a sail even suppose he got a hold of one. It couldn't be that he wanted to wrap himself up in it on account of modesty because they wasn't nobody to look at him only squirrels and divots, and besides by this time his beard must of been practically an ulster you might say. But anyway that is all he done. Personally if I was left alone on an island for ten years without no telephone or no sacramental wine, I would certainly try and put in my odd moments getting something done. I would make out a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

few checks and write a column letter to Heywood Broun and practice with a brassie and then if they was any time left, I would try and compose a couple more Wow verses for Gallagher and Shean so as they wouldn't have to go off the stage as soon as they come on you might say.

Well, finally Enoch happened to look at the ocean one day and what should he see going past but the Olympic who he knew the captain. Hey Frank he yelled and the captain recognized his voice and sounded two taps on the bell throttle which means ship ahoy. In a whole lot less time than I am going to take to tell it the ship had pulled up at the warp and Enoch got aboard and they asked him what place was that he had been stopping and he says he had nicknamed it the forest of Arden. This got a big laugh and they put him in the ship's concert, where he flopped.

Pretty soon they come to Enoch's home town and he took a taxi up to where he use to live but they was a for sale sign on the gate so he went down to a joint ran by the notorious Miriam Lane and got boiled. Mrs. Lane had a few with him and told him in a maudlin way what had came off and that Annie was married to Philip and living in a new apartment house with stationary washtubs. So Enoch snooped up there and took a look in the window and seen the whole family playing halma, so he went back to the Lane dump and had a few more.

Listen he says to Mrs. Lane do you know who I am. I am Enoch Arden.

The hell you say was Mrs. Lane's criticism.

Listen he says I am going to drink myself to death and when I am dead you go and tell Annie I am dead as it may relieve her mind.

You will relieve my mind by going to bed says Mrs. Lane.

So he died that night and Mrs. Lane told the Rays about it and they give him an Elks funeral and everybody put on the dog.

TENEMENT CHILDREN

By Daniel Henderson

EAGLETS have no bounds or bars
Save the cordon of the stars;

Only searching beagles know
Where the little foxes go;

Little fish have leave to glide
With the world-engirdling tide;

Man bids lovely childhood bloom
In this pestilential gloom!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SARAH BERNHARDT

By Charles Henry Meltzer

I AM old enough to have been under the spell of Sarah Bernhardt when she was in her prime; and young enough to have kept the enthusiasm which she awoke in me till the last days of her long life drew near. To most reviewers of the hour here in New York, with their near backgrounds, Bernhardt has sometimes seemed a tedious legend. But to those of us who were fortunate enough to applaud her at the Théâtre-Français on great nights gone by, she will be always dear and an unfading glory.

It is not, though, to the actress who has passed on to another stage that I ask permission to pay tribute — the poor tribute of a friend who knew her closely, at her best and worst, and who, despite her human faults and human frailties, admired her always and believed her a great woman. Beside her even Duse, a rare artist, seems rather trifling to the writer of these lines. While of the "stars", so called, to whom most here bow down, who has a scintilla of her brightness?

She was an artist, of the finest, highest kind. But she was first a character — a woman of compelling will and force, individual, all herself, a burning flame. Incidentally, but only in a small way, she was in turn sculptor, painter, and writer. She had invented several plays, some of which were never acted, while one was seen and rather well received at the Paris Odéon. She had also now and then dashed off some novels. Of these the last, I think, was "Petite Idole", published here last year as "The Idol of Paris". It is largely autobiographical.

If any person in the world has proved the truth of the perhaps misleading dictum which defines genius as the art of taking infinite pains, Bernhardt surely has. She was an honest, tireless, never resting worker in her chosen field. Her art was the one god she always worshiped. And to that art she gave up all her strength. She had no patience with her many gifted rivals who were content with being charming and inspired. Unless they worked to make the utmost of their gifts, she would condemn them. Thanks to her patience, her intelligence and honesty, her artistic honesty, when she was seventy she could still delight her audiences. Behind all her most amazing exhibitions, we could perceive the great technique which made them possible. Her technique helped her to the very end. It overcame, at times, the tragic handicap of an actress who had lost one of her limbs. It enabled her, only a few years ago, to play the death scene in "La Dame aux Camélias" as touchingly as in her early days. Her devotion to the technique of her art shamed our young "stars". But our reviewers only saw in her — a woman: a woman maimed and aging, and not beautiful, perhaps, who fought with passion to retain her envied queenship.

For she had been — and she still was — a queen. I can recall a certain night when Paris crowned her, and when the critics of New York, at my peti-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion, sent her a message to express their admiration. And I remember her reply — the gracious telegram in which she thanked them for their tribute. She was not young then. She was growing old. Yet her vitality and will were so surprising that for almost twenty years after that night she kept her grip on Paris. Not till a year or two ago, indeed, did she begin to realize — or to confess — how old she was. When I last talked with her, in her familiar home near the Place Wagram, I noticed that she was ceasing to disguise her age. White locks were mingled with her tawny hair and, to my sorrow, she was slightly hard of hearing. We lunched together. She was full of life, as usual. She talked of everything: the stage, the world, and art. She referred to Charlie Chaplin and to Arbuckle (who, she protested, was too fat to be a criminal). But I could see that it was only by an effort that she kept pace with life. The coquetries and graces which had charmed me many times at her own table were less natural. And they all vanished when a retainer came to carry her upstairs — poor tortured soul — on a chair or litter. I turned away then, for I dreaded to embarrass her, but she rebuked me, saying, "Oh, you needn't mind me!"

She had been a friend to me, and in her way an ideal, since my young student days at the Sorbonne. And when she chose, she could be a kind friend. Yet caprices were not foreign to her nature, and, if it pleased her, she could be a dangerous foe. She never, I think, wholly forgave Duse for challenging her supremacy, or quite forgot what she regarded — even if she did not say so — as Duse's ingratitude. It was at Bernhardt's theatre (then the Renaissance) that Duse had appeared for the first time in Paris. Soon after that, the two "stars" had been parted.

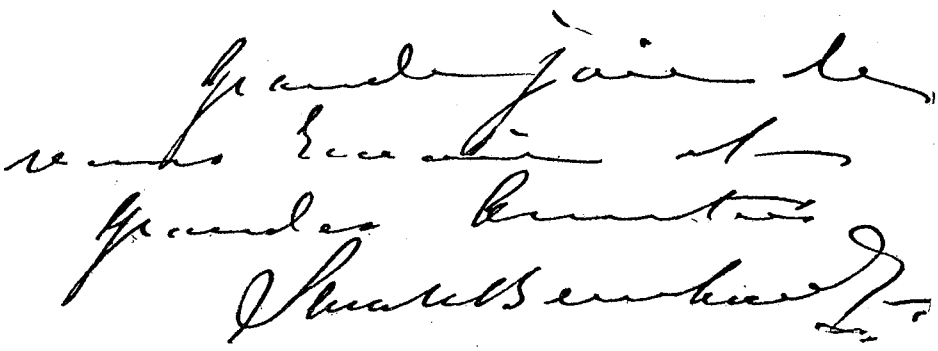
However tragic she might be upon the boards, in private — with her friends — Bernhardt dropped tragedy. She had the gaiety and lightness of a comédienne, though only twice, in great ways, did she reveal this fact — in "Francillon" and in "Frou-frou". It was a privilege and joy to be her guest, as I have often been. To her the theatre seemed a part, not all, of life. When she was touring in this country, she would miss no chance, if her train stopped here or there, of getting out and driving madly through the neighborhood, till "All aboard!" was heard and she rode on again. Her interest in life was inexhaustible. It was not confined to drama or to those other arts in which she played her part. It embraced religion, science, sociology, politics, and literature.

At our last meeting, she presented me with a copy of her novel "Petite Idole", which she had written *"pour passer le temps"* when she was "resting" in her Belle-Ile seaside home. "Read this," she said. "I think you will like it. Much in the book, as you will see, concerns myself."

I have not forgotten many other things she said to me, especially as to the folly, as she thought it, of allowing oneself to cease working before one was exhausted. At eighty or thereabouts, the most popular and remarkable journalist of his time in France, Emile de Girardin, had announced to her his intention of retiring. "Don't do that", she had answered, "or you'll — die!" But he persisted. And he lived six weeks.

No matter who might be the guests she was entertaining — royalties had foregathered with her — when she was due at a performance or a rehearsal

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Grande joie de vous recevoir, et grandes amitiés" — the closing words of a note from Bernhardt, inviting Mr. Meltzer to dine with her at her theatre.

she would leave them. Art and her public meant much more to her than royalty. Once, when I was among her visitors at Les Poulains (her first Belle-Ile house, off the coast of Brittany) she received a telegram. It reminded her that she had promised to be present at the unveiling of some statue in the north of France. In a moment she began packing. Next morning we were whirled away in a dreadful express train to Paris. A promise of that kind was not mere piecrust to this spoilt tragédienne.

Her leisure? Well, she spent it in reading plays, in writing stories, or in painting, studying parts, and toying with sculpture. She had a quick wit and she liked amusing anecdotes. Her humor helped to sustain her in adversity.

Adversity. It dogged her. Even in the heyday of her career she was in financial difficulties. She had been "sold up" in one of her Paris homes — in the Avenue de Villiers. Her possessions had been scattered. She was constantly in debt. For, though she had earned millions, she had spent freely. Money was much to her. Yet she treated it as if it meant little. I am told (I do not know how truly) that, but for her indebtedness to the United States Internal Revenue Department, she would have returned to America, for the last of her farewell tours. It may have been just as well that she did not return.

Time was, in the days of "Le Sphinx" and "L'Etrangère" at the Théâtre-Français, when it was Sarah Bernhardt's wish, they say, to be buried at Père-la-Chaise (where she now rests), next to her long popular comrade and rival, Croizette. Later we heard that she had determined she would prefer her tomb to be erected on one of the huge rocks on the dark coastline of Belle-Ile. There the roaring waves and peeping sea gulls would have sung to her an appropriate threnody. And there, perhaps, long after those who loved and applauded her had gone to their accounts, pilgrims would have stared and wondered at her monument.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LADY OF A TRADITION: V. SACKVILLE-WEST

By Grant Overton

"THERE are two sides from which you may first profitably look at the house. One is from the park, the north side. From here the pile shows best the vastness of its size; it looks like a mediæval village. It is heaped with no attempt at symmetry; it is sombre and frowning; the grey towers rise; the battlements cut out their square regularity against the sky; the buttresses of the old twelfth-century tithe-barn give a rough impression of fortifications. There is a line of trees in one of the inner courtyards, and their green heads show above the roofs of the old breweries; but although they are actually trees of a considerable size they are dwarfed and unnoticeable against the mass of the buildings blocked behind them. The whole pile soars to a peak which is the clock-tower with its pointed roof; it might be the spire of the church on the summit of the hill crowning the mediæval village. At sunset I have seen the silhouette of the great building stand dead black on a red sky; on moonlight nights it stands black and silent, with glinting windows, like an enchanted castle. On misty autumn nights I have seen it emerging partially from the trails of vapour and heard the lonely roar of the red deer roaming under the walls."

Such is the opening page of V. Sackville-West's volume, "Knole and the Sackvilles", a handsomely printed and illustrated account of the seat of the Earls and Dukes of Dorset. Authentic record of the family goes not beyond that Herbrand de Sackville who came to England with William the Conqueror. Knole, bought by Archbishop Bourchier in 1456, and held by Cardinal Morton, Cranmer, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Queen Mary, and Elizabeth, was granted in 1586 by Elizabeth to Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, first Earl of Dorset. The name "West" enters with the marriage of Lady Elizabeth Sackville, sister of the fourth Duke, to John West, Earl de la Warr.

The house, of seven courts to correspond with the days of the week, fifty-two staircases matching the weeks of the year, and 365 rooms answering to the days of the year*, "is gentle and venerable. It has the deep inward gaiety of some very old woman who has always been beautiful, who has had many lovers and seen many generations come and go, smiled wisely over their sorrows and their joys, and learnt an imperishable secret of tolerance and humour. It is, above all,

*"I cannot truthfully say", writes Miss Sackville-West in "Knole and the Sackvilles", "that I have ever verified these counts, and it may be that their accuracy is accepted solely on the strength of the legend; but, if this is so, then it has been a very persistent legend, and I prefer to sympathise with the amusement of the ultimate architect on making the discovery that by a judicious juggling with his additions he could bring courts, stairs and rooms up to that satisfactory total."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an English house." The garden side is the gay, the princely side. When, in summer, the doors of the second gate house were left open, "it has sometimes happened that I have found a stag in the banqueting hall, puzzled but still dignified, strayed in from the park since no barrier checked him".

In 1825 the duchess Arabella Diana died and her estate devolved upon her two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. Elizabeth, as has been told, became the wife of Lord de la Warr. Dying in 1870, she left Buckhurst to her older sons and Knole to her younger sons, one of whom was Miss Sackville-West's grandfather. He was eighty and she perhaps eight, and as he shared "the family failing of unsociability" it fell to the child's lot to show the house to visitors. In this, as in more natural ways, she became highly familiar with Knole and from her earliest years must have loved the place. On receipt of a telegram that people were coming, Grandpapa would take the next train for London, "returning in the evening when the coast was clear". The Cartoon Gallery, the Leicester Gallery, the Brown Gallery; Lady Betty Germaine's bedchamber; the three principal bedrooms, the Spangled Room, the Venetian Ambassador's, and the King's chamber, "the only vulgar room in the house" with furniture made entirely in silver and articles of silver, "even to a little eye-bath" — the procession of the days and years was not more certain than the procession of the curious, the inquisitive, and the wonder-struck through these. You will fashion your own picture of the daughter of the Sackvilles standing before the portrait of Lady Margaret Sackville (over the fireplace in Lady Betty's sitting room) and endeavoring, quite vainly, to do her own hair in the elaborate manner of young Lady Margaret's. Or, it may be, she had been naughty that day, and had hid herself inside the pulpit of the Chapel of the Archbishops, where, in spite of private steps leading out of her bedroom straight into the family pew, "they never found me". Grandpapa was "a queer and silent old man", as Miss Sackville-West remembers him. "He knew nothing whatever about the works of art in the house; he spent hours gazing at the flowers, followed about the garden by two grave demoiselle cranes. . . . He and I, who so often shared the house alone between us, were companions in a shy and undemonstrative way. Although he had nothing to say to his unfortunate guests, he could understand a child. . . . When we were at Knole alone together I used to go down to his sitting-room in the evening to play draughts with him — and never knew whether I played to please him, or he played to please me — and sometimes, very rarely, he told me stories of when he was a small boy, and played with the rocking-horse, and of the journeys by coach with his father and mother from Buckhurst to Knole or from Knole to London; of their taking the silver with them under the seat; of their having outriders with pistols; and of his father and mother never addressing each other, in their children's presence, as anything but 'my Lord' and 'my Lady'. I clasped my knees and stared at him when he told me these stories of an age which already seemed so remote, and his pale blue eyes gazed away into the past, and suddenly his shyness would return to him and the clock in the corner would begin to wheeze in preparation to striking the hour, and he would say that it was time for me to go to bed. . . ."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At the age of thirteen Miss Sackville-West wrote "an enormous novel" about the figure of Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset, who seemed to her the embodiment of cavalier romance. And perhaps he was. "He had the advantage of starting with the Vandyck portrait in the hall, the flame-coloured doublet, the blue Garter, the characteristic swaggering attitude, the sword, the love-locks, the key of office painted dangling from his hip and the actual key dangling on a ribbon from the frame of the picture." The dashing career of this follower of King Charles, who fought a duel with Lord Bruce and whose younger son was murdered by the Roundheads, became "a source of rich romance to a youthful imagination nourished on 'Cyrano' and 'The Three Musketeers'." The half grown girl reexamined certain old nail studded trunks in the attics, mute witnesses to Cromwellian violence, some of them curved to fit the roof of a barouche. "The battered trunks were stacked near the entrance to the hiding-place, which, without the smallest justification save an old candlestick and a rope-ladder found therein, I peopled with the fugitive figures of priests and Royalists. I peeped into the trunks: they contained only a dusty jumble of broken ironwork, some old books, some bits of hairy plaster fallen from the ceiling, some numbers of 'Punch' for 1850. Nevertheless, there were the gaping holes where the locks had been prised off the trunks, and the lid forced back upon the hinges by an impatient hand. Down in the Poets' Parlour, where I lunched with my grandfather, taciturn unless he happened to crack one of his little stock-in-trade of jokes, Cromwell's soldiers had held their Court of Sequestration. The Guard Room was empty of arms or armour, save for a few pikes and halberds, because Cromwell's soldiers had taken all the armour away. The past mingled with the present in constant reminder; and out in the summer-house, after luncheon, with the bees blundering among the flowers of the Sunk Garden and the dragon-flies flashing over the pond, I returned to the immense ledger in which I was writing my novel, while Grandpapa retired to his little sitting-room and whittled paper-knives from the lids of cigar-boxes, and thought about — Heaven knows what *he* thought about."

Miss Sackville-West is writing of Knole, of course, in her long story called "The Heir". The manor of Blackboys with its peacocks is not Knole; I suppose no one makes the mistake of literal identification of people and places in fiction — at least, none should do so. What is truly identifiable is never anything tangible at all; it is merely an emotion. When we read "The Heir", subtitled "A Love Story", and acquaint ourselves in a leisurely sufficience with the fellow Chase, we should be stupid indeed if we grasped at the substance and neglected the shadow. It is shadow and its correspondent sunlight for which, after all, mankind lives a life wherein the things of substance are the final unreality. . . .

But her first book, which was brought to the attention of the American publisher by Hugh Walpole, was a novel called "Heritage", an unusual story of young lovers. The breath of distinction upon the tale more than redeemed its faults of construction, of which perhaps after all the most serious was merely the device of a letter immensely longer than any epistle probable to be written. Then, in point of publication at least, came "The Dragon in Shallow Waters",

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

also a novel. Some two years elapsed before the appearance of her third novel, "Challenge", a piece of work of such a character as to demand our earnest scrutiny. "Challenge" is to be followed by "The Heir and Other Stories".

I have been speaking of American publication; in England Miss Sackville-West first came to notice as a poet. Her "Poems of West and East" was followed by another collection called "Orchard and Vineyard". Her work in verse exhibited austerity of expression joined to an emotional and descriptive power difficult to appraise. Although it may be, as has been said, that the chief use of poetry written when one is young is to produce a finer prose when one is older.

Of "The Heir" it is best to say little since a few betraying words can so easily spoil its secret for the reader. In the same volume appear "The Christmas Party", "Patience", "Her Son", and "The Parrot", a vignette dedicated to "H. G. N." All the qualities present in "The Heir" may be found in the other tales, so varyingly shorter — delicacy, precision, dramatic power, and a perception of beauty translated almost without the use of a single emotional word. In "The Christmas Party" we have the deferred revenge of a woman, a theatrical costumer, upon her strait minded family; "Patience" is an elderly man's recollection, in perfectly domesticated surroundings, of his youthful affair; "Her Son" is the inevitable cruelty inflicted upon a mother by the passage of the years; the story of "The Parrot" points to the only escape from the . . . cage.

The "H. G. N." of its dedication is the Honorable Harold G. Nicolson. Except as an author, the lady of Knole is no longer V. Sackville-West but the Honorable Mrs. Harold G. Nicolson.

"Challenge", a novel that may instructively be compared with Joseph Conrad's "Nostromo", had the curious fortune to be published first in America and — what is more remarkable — only in America. It might seem altogether extraordinary that one of the most noteworthy novels by an Englishwoman in years should not only not be published first in England but should not be published there at all. It might seem very extraordinary; and it is. The circumstances were perhaps without a precedent and, it may be hoped, will be without a duplication. In 1920 an English publisher had accepted "Challenge" and prepared it for issuance. That is to say, type had been set, plates had been cast, the sheets of the novel had been printed, folded and sewed. Nothing remained but to encase them in cloth — a matter of a week, usually — when the book would be ready to go on sale. Then fate intervened.

It transpired (or was allowed to transpire) that Miss Sackville-West had written her novel about an actual family, portraying that family in general and possibly in particular. The family was part of her own, or shall we say connected with her own; and it was not without influence. This influence was immediately exerted to secure the suppression of "Challenge". How far the influence succeeded by virtue of its own force and considerations, and how far it was aided by the peculiarity of the English libel law, which recognizes technical libel, I am unable to say; but succeed it did. "Challenge" remained unbound and the English house either put it down as a loss or, with a sanguineness born of much publishing experience, carried it in its inventory. There were all those folded and sewed sheets con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stituting a very fair sized edition, as English editions go, packed away in some sufficiently dry place. At Knole and in Cornwall and it may be in other places Miss Sackville-West continued writing.

Probably the only challenge to the suppressors of the novel in England lay in the single figurative word of the title. Miss Sackville-West could be said to be writing of the actual family only in the same sense that we can say, in alluding to the manor of Blackboys, in "The Heir", that she writes of Knole. Some South American republic, indeed, any South American republic, would be equally justified in beginning suit for libel against Conrad for the picture of Costaguana in "Nostromo" — could a court be discovered in which such a suit would be justiciable. It is charitable to suppose that the suppressors beheld themselves mirrored in the pages of "Challenge" because they were victims of a narcism complex. However, the interesting disabilities of these people were of no serious importance on this side of the Atlantic; Miss Sackville-West had done no work of such importance as the unborn "Challenge"; and after all those unbound sheets had lain untouched for two years or longer the day came when an American publisher took the whole lot, together with the plates to enable him to print more, and "Challenge" saw the light in the United States early in 1923.

It is still unpublishable in England and seems destined indefinitely to remain so. Not indignation nor ridicule is likely to alter this state of affairs, since the prototypes of Miss Sackville-West's Davenants must be conceived of as resembling Galsworthy's Forsytes in one respect: they are almost certainly impervious to the wrath or derision of any except their own kind, and this will hardly be forthcoming.

"Challenge", admirable in its technique, begins with an epilogue, giving us through the eyes of disinterested bystanders a glimpse of Julian Davenant many years afterward. We see him with his wife at a great affair in London. He has power, wealth, distinction; and his wife is perfectly equipped for her rôle. Many people expect that Davenant will be the next viceroy; he has already been in the Cabinet. A cynical man, who believes in nothing — and a philanthropist, really. His face, rather his eyes, give one the impression that he has "learnt all the sorrow of the world"; they are inexpressibly weary. And the two onlookers, a man and a woman, recall that there was some "crazy adventure" in Julian Davenant's youth. "Very romantic, but we all start by being romantic until we have outgrown it."

The three parts which follow narrate in a strictly chronological order the details of that "crazy adventure". Julian Davenant was the young son of a house of English Levantines, that is to say, an English family established for several generations in the Levant and possessing, at the time of the story, besides much land, the site of valuable vineyards, prestige and influence and political power. It will be recalled that the Goulds of Costaguana in "Nostromo" constituted a similar clan. Such English exoterics (not to say exotics) are only moderately rare. It is not proper to speak of them as hybrids, since in their marriages they are careful to avoid a non-English admixture and their sons are invariably sent to England for their education. Without in any essential degree sacrificing a single one of those peculiarly tenacious English traits of character and without any alteration of the Eng-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lish habit of thought, they are in most other matters assimilated to the country of their holdings. They come to understand it, its ways, its habit of thought and policy of conduct and instinct of behavior with a completeness that amounts to perfection, and reposes, as a rule and deep down, on a sincere distaste. They are really marvelous, whether Goulds in South America or Davenants in Greece. And their young men . . .

In any comparison of "Nostromo" and "Challenge" it will be found that the most obvious likenesses are purely superficial. In "Nostromo" we have the son, Charles Gould, determined to avenge, by a patient commercialism and a silent political sagacity, the fate of his Uncle Harry and the killing worry of his father; the instrumentality to his hand is the silver of the mine. In "Challenge" young Julian Davenant is the victim of the romantic impulse which causes him to respond, at any cost, to the patriotic appeal of the islands lying off the coast and unwillingly a part of the tiny republic of Herakleion. The girl, Eve, and the woman, Kato, a native of the islands and a famous singer, are the personal contending forces in the struggle over Julian Davenant. Eve is Julian's cousin. In the developing story of her love for Julian, in its culminating struggle and final disaster, a precise comparison with "Nostromo" — even in respect of the tragedy that befell Linda Viola — is a waste of our attention.

What may profitably be compared in Mr. Conrad's acknowledged masterpiece and Miss Sackville-West's dramatic novel is the identity of method and art. I say "identity" without any hesitation, for in both cases I think the artist has achieved a proportionately impressive and living and beautiful result. As to method, the reader will observe for himself that either novel might have been written by either author. In each case the actual knowledge of a totally foreign country is perhaps the same; and in neither case is it very great or very important. Again, in each case, the imaginative creation is on a plane so much above the level attained in other (and very excellent) novels that the book must definitely be set in a class apart. One accounts for the intense imaginative insight of "The Old Wives' Tale" and "My Antonia" (to choose two especially fine examples) by saying that, after all, both Arnold Bennett and Willa Cather had the immeasurable aid of childhood's unblunted perceptiveness; and in so partially accounting for the sheer fact, one does quite rightly. But neither memory nor the deepest well of sympathy serves to explain "Nostromo" and "Challenge"; in these two novels the imagination had to create something *de novo* and actively body it forth; memories, hearsay, would be an actual interference and the existence of an outer world a positive interruption. They are both novels of a perfectly valid idea recreated in terms of the subconscious personality. If that is too cloudy an explanation I will ask you to think of the subconscious mind as a happily benevolent oyster, of the germ idea as an infinitesimal particle of irritant sand, and of the accomplished story as the resulting pearl. It is as near as I can come to conveying what I mean . . . and know to be at least subjectively true.

Abandoning this difficult region and ascending to the surface on which most art and literary method lies, the comparison becomes so easy that one feels superfluous in making it. Have we not the same complexity of persons

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presented in an intimate relation to each other and composing a little world, complete socially, politically, and in their attitudes; so that we can perfectly conceive them in any set of circumstances? Have we not also an atmosphere resulting from a multitude of impalpable small touches? Is not the effect in each case more exact than any impression to be derived from personal familiarity with either South America or Greece? Is not the same impersonal viewpoint present, the same astringent humor in evidence in its application to the incongruities of the life depicted? In both cases the avoidance of any expression of emotion, the final austerity of the highest art, exercises an effect out of all predictable proportion on the emotions of the reader. He is led to feel amusement, ridicule, sympathy, indignation, dismay, horror, and grief; because never is it intimated to him that it is his duty to feel any of these things. And, in the end, under the profound sadness of magnificent expiations, the whole affair seems to be held up "without choice and without fear . . . to show its vibration, its colour, its form; and through its movement, its form and its colour, reveal the substance of its truth — disclose its inspiring secret: the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment. . . ."

"What was the promise of that mediocre ease beside the certainty of these exquisite privations?" So Chase questioned himself, in Miss Sackville-West's story of "The Heir". "What was that drudgery beside this beauty, this pride, this Quixotism?" There is only one answer. If you would be an artist you do not even bother with the answer. But your heart leaps.

Bibliography

Poems of West and East [in England].
Orchard and Vineyard. 1921 [in England].
Heritage. 1918.
The Dragon in Shallow Waters. 1920.
Knole and the Sackvilles. 1923.
Challenge. 1923. [Withdrawn in England prior to publication, 1920.]
The Heir and Other Stories. 1923.

References

Knole and the Sackvilles, generally and especially pages 11, 17, 68, 82, 83, 219 and 220.
Who's Who.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BONS MOTS HERE AND THERE

By Robert Cortes Holliday

"DO you not eat vegetables, Mr. Brummell?"

"Yes, madam, I once ate a pea," was the reply.

There is an excellent book, published some ten years ago, which every once in awhile I take down from my shelves when I have nothing to do but to entertain myself. This volume is entitled "Dandies and Men of Letters", and the author is Leon H. Vincent. This title is not designed to imply, as some of the reviewers of the book seemed to think was the case when it was issued, that all of the figures who are the subject of the volume were *both* dandies and men of letters; but that some of the portraits are of dandies and others are of men of letters. Thus the volume, quite fittingly, opens with a very accomplished essay on "The Celebrated Mr. Brummell". Herein the author retrieves for us from various fading sources a bouquet of the *mots* of the illustrious Beau on which his reputation for great wit was founded. Their fragrance has not withered away with time. I like especially the one about the pea. That was a pleasant bit of drollery, too, when Brummell attributed a severe cold to the landlord's having put him into a room with "a damp stranger". Diverting, also, was his reply to a friend who asked him why he was limping: Brummell explained that he had hurt his leg and, worse luck, "it was his favorite leg". Another neat comment of the Regency dandy would have served very appropriately for some of the weather of our present spring. An acquaintance asked him whether he had ever seen such an unseasonable summer. "Yes", replied the Beau, "last winter." This *mot*, as Mr. Vincent suggests, reminds one of Horace Walpole's, "Spring has set in with its usual severity."

A man, a man with a light touch and no end of reading, could do far worse, had he the leisure, than to engage himself in the composition of a thoroughgoing work on the subject of the *mot* throughout history, assembling some several thousand of them of different periods and countries. There is not in existence even a modest essay upon the subject; at least, if there is I have been unable to find trace of it. The standard works of general reference are very meagre here. They, some of them, give several illustrations of the definition of the term, such as: "Jeffrey. Contrib. Edin. Rev. (1844): 'Another *mot* of hers became an established canon at all the tables of Paris' "; but they supply no array of examples. A *mot* of the Athenians to Pompey the Great is referred to in one place, and in another Descartes is named as the author of the *mot*, "My theory of vortices is a philosophical romance" — not, I should say, an especially good one. The "Stanford Dictionary of Anglicised Words and Phrases" reminds us that it became absolutely the fashion, during the reign of terror, to make *bons mots* on the way to be guillotined; and from James Howell's "Letters" is cited the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vogue in his day of keeping albums in which it was sought to have friends and approachable personages inscribe a sentiment known as "the *mot* of remembrance".

A *mot* is, in the precise meaning of the word, a *saying*, especially a brief saying, epigrammatic, pithy, forceful, or witty; *bon mot*, literally a good saying. And, I think we will agree, it should have the air of having sprung forth spontaneously; it should (at any rate, in effect) have been a casual saying. The ancient epigrammatical writers, Greek and Roman, were not, in this view, authors of *mots*. Rochefoucauld in his "Maxims", Pope in his couplets, Franklin in his "Poor Richard" do not have just the flavor we mean when we speak of a *mot*. There are, of course, plenty of volumes dealing with proverbs, adages, aphorisms, epitaphs, anecdotes, and set mottoes, but they are little to the purpose when one is in the mood for the sort of pungent sallies which we are here discussing.

Everyone, doubtless, has lying about in his memory a very fair little collection of his favorite *mots*. No one, of course, will have forgotten Dr. Johnson's observation concerning the dog that walked on its hind legs; nor Lincoln's comment in regard to the proper length for a man's legs. Such classic sayings do not lose by long familiarity their power to amuse, nor their stimulating appeal to common sense. Every now and then one comes across an excellent *mot* which is all that is known of the obscure person who made it. One such is recorded (by a commentator upon Swift) of "a widow lady of very respectable family", Mrs. Seneca, of Drogheda, who kept an inn where the great Dean slept one night. In the morning Swift made a violent complaint of the sheets being dirty.

"Dirty, indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Seneca; "you are the last man, doctor, that should complain of dirty sheets."

Yes, he had just published the "Lady's Dressing-room", a very dirty sheet indeed.

It is pleasant to be surprised by an amiable *mot* where little expected. Boswell one time asked Dr. Johnson why Pope said some lines which he repeated. "Sir", said the Doctor, "he hoped he would vex somebody." But, after all, Pope appears to have died bravely and cheerfully enough. His doctor, so the story goes, was offering him one day the usual encouragements, telling him his breath was easier, and so on, when a friend entered, to whom the poet exclaimed, "Here I am, dying of a hundred good symptoms." This suggests, of course, another death bed *mot*, the famous, "I am afraid, gentlemen, I am an unconscionable time a-dying", of Charles II.

Sometimes the sayings of a man who has acquired a great reputation as a wit do not, upon our returning to them, hold up. I happened to mention to a young librarian the other day the sort of thing I was in the mind to regale myself with. He at once suggested Oscar Wilde. I think today you would find Oscar's obviously cooked up epigrams and aphorisms lamentably flat. They have lost their edge. Indeed, one is now inclined to feel that they were little more than flip to begin with. All his real ideas, his ideas of art, I suspect, he got from Whistler, anyhow. We have Jimmie's *mot* upon that. "I wish I had said that!" Wilde exclaimed of something the Master had just said. "You will, Oscar; you will," was Whistler's reply. *That*, undeniably, has plenty of sparkle. So great in his heyday was Mr. Whistler's reputation as a wit that, we recall, it was said anyone could

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

produce mirth in a cultivated company by merely prefacing a remark with the phrase "as Whistler once said"; and, further, it was declared that anything good that anyone happened to say was sure to turn up later as something "Whistler once said". It has been argued, too, that the barbed *mots* of the author of "The Gentle Art of Making Enemies" and "The Baronet and the Butterfly" were woefully unworthy of the painter of the "Portrait of My Mother", "Miss Alexander", and some half a hundred other masterpieces. It puzzled George Moore (until he found an ingenious theory of explanation) that the man who was capable of spending the afternoon painting like one of the greatest could then rush off to polish the tail of an epigram "possibly good enough for 'Punch' ".

Well, that was his way. A *mot* is not made to stand for a man as a monument. One may, I think, still find a round number of Whistler's very good. There was witty perspicacity in his reply when a person asked him who "may be" the greatest black and white artist in the England of the time, and he answered "Phil May". It was an apposite fling at "gush" when, to the lady who purred to him that there was no one like Whistler and Velasquez, he retorted: "Madam, why drag in Velasquez?" He expressed the fundamental principle of all good art in the deft: "Nature is always wrong." And, certainly, he put into a nutshell the whole ardor of creation in his splendid phrase, "an artist's career always begins tomorrow". That recalls to my mind a fine saying of another American painter, Edward Simmons, which I have often heard him use (it is not, I believe, in his book): "Each new morning is a virgin." So up with all one's spirit and woo her!

Perhaps the most famous, most widely relished of our home grown American *mots* was Mark Twain's comment on mistaken newspaper reports of his death, that they were "greatly exaggerated". A Mark Twain witticism which has had little currency was told to me one time in Los Angeles, by a gentleman of the name of Thomas Miranda, who is connected with the motion picture business there. Mark, visiting relatives of Mr. Miranda, left his cigar ash all over the house — on the mantel, piano top, window sills. This was carefully gathered into a fruit jar by reverent members of the family, and he was asked to autograph the label pasted onto the jar. He wrote: "These are positively my ashes. — S. L. Clemens." I had nearly forgotten — this anecdote has had publication, of a transient kind; Christopher Morley printed it some time ago in his column, "The Bowling Green".

We are inclined, I suspect, to think of the *bon mot* as something we read of, which came about much more naturally in the social intercourse of other times and lands than our own. Doubtless, the cultivation of polished wit in conversation is not a pastime very general among us. But there are still with us makers of *bons mots par excellence*. The first of these today, I should say, is Oliver Herford. He has the flavor of olden pages.

One time a distinguished guest was being shown about the club house of the Players. (I do not know whether or not this little story has before found its way into print.) The party paused before a death mask of the author of "The Rivals". The visitor looked somewhat startled. "And so that", he exclaimed, "is the death mask of Richard Brinsley Sheridan! Why, how emaciated he looks! I had always

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thought of him as a gay, rollicking, jovial blade."

"Well", observed Mr. Herford, "you know he wasn't feeling very well when that was taken."

Another time a friend, a writer of some little parts, remarked to Mr. Herford: "Ah! But you're a genius."

Oliver wheeled upon him with the retort: "You're another!"

Herford sayings could be collected from the memory of his friends to fill a fairly sizable chapter. One more must here suffice. Said Mr. Herford to the æsthetic gentleman: "Why do you call yourself a 'photograph*ist*', why not a photographer?"

The reply was: "Don't you call yourself an artist?"

"No," answered Mr. Herford; "I'm an art*er*."

A very entertaining incident in journalism which may appropriately be recorded here was pleasantly rounded out by a touch from Don Marquis. The story goes to the tune of "With an Urn on the Table and a Good Song Going Round". The prize typographical error of our time appeared in one of the leading American literary magazines some time during the course of the world war — in fact, the magazine was THE BOOKMAN, though this was before the editorship of Mr. Farrar. The writer of an article had referred to Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn". The printer, with his mind filled with the news of the day, set the title to read, "Ode on a German Urn". Mr. Marquis, on being told of the joke, murmured, "Grecian stein."

Kelly pool apparently is a social activity highly stimulating to the production of *mots*. Rea Irvin, magazine artist, playing the other day, amiably remarked of an opponent in the game (a rather headstrong player, if that is not too intrusive an aside): "He holds the secret of that shot in the hollow of his head." Don Marquis has reported this one before me, in his column. He printed: "A. E. Thomas, our favorite American playwright, says it takes a major operation to extract money from a minor poet." At the time someone standing by remarked to Marquis: "I suppose you'll use that." "Oh, I'll give him a couple of days to forget about it!" Don answered.

Baltimore has a bookseller of a very pretty wit. His name is Meredith Janvier and, as this paragraph will show, he considers it desirable to be born at an early age. His casual letters usually are several pages in length, typed single space, and with a quirk in nearly every line. He quaintly carries his merriment into even his catalogues. In one of his lists of first editions, rare books, and old prints he follows the title and description of a book, published in 1874 and announced to be in his stock, with this comment: "First edition. A good copy. Very scarce. A book dear to all fortunate enough to have been born in the seventies or eighties. *Personally I wish I had been born in the thirties or even tens or twenties.*"

It is an admirable thing to hold one's own in this world. Richard Malchien, actor, now playing in "Polly Preferred", one time in talking playfully with a group of friends declared he was not going to "give his corpse" to Westminster Abbey. "Quite right, Dick!" exclaimed Jules Guérin, painter; "you hang on to it." No autobiography extant, by the way, has so magnificent a title as the one which Mr. Malchien has, in jovial fancy, hit upon for his own. It is "Pearls Before Swine". The title is as far as he has got.

But the best of all Mr. Malchien's

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sayings, and a line meet to be graven upon the enduring tablets of humor, came about in this way. He happened to remark to a friend that he was fifty-seven years of age. "Are you, indeed!" commented his companion. "Why, you hardly look that." Which brought from Mr. Malchien the remark that he had abused his constitution. "Why", he exclaimed, "if I'd taken any care of myself at all I might have been ninety right now!" A curious commentary on good habits as a short cut to old age.

Charles Hanson Towne is authority for a striking illustration of the dangers attendant upon growing better and better day by day. Lola Fisher, stage star (he tells), said that she had tried the Coué method, but being impelled to knock wood so much she bruised her finger until she had to see a doctor about it.

A pleasantry presenting a happy case of affluence in poverty is related now and then by Richard Le Gallienne. For instance he tells of a writer whose work is directed to an audience of the elect; at any rate, it is not of a kind which sells widely. But, the writer is fond of saying, "he does not care how poor he is so long as he lives in luxury".

Those who have seen George Sterling, poet of the rich and memorable line, who has dwelt for so long in his "cool, grey city of love", San Francisco, will not have forgotten the distinction of his countenance. In a letter to me some time ago Mr. Sterling happened to tell me Jack London's idea of his (Sterling's) physiognomy — which should be relished by anyone with any fancy at all for a felicitous phrase — "A Greek coin run over by a Roman chariot."

Now we have just time remaining to us here to turn to an entertaining kind of kink in talk which for our purpose we may call Malaprop *mots*, though it may be that you prefer to call them "bulls". Things like this: A young man connected in an aristocratic way with the publishing business the other day asked, very seriously, a friend of his: "Can you keep a secret — even" (as a cautious afterthought) "in your cups?"

"But you know", said the other, "I don't drink now."

"Then maybe", said the young man, hesitatingly, "I'd better not tell you."

A second: An actor before mentioned in these pages announced to one sitting beside him in the billiard room that he had written a letter to a friend of theirs. "What did you tell him?" asked the other.

"I don't know," the correspondent blankly replied; "I just put it in the mail box."

And a third: "Boy or girl?" a well known editor's wife asked her husband concerning the newly born child of a couple of their acquaintance.

"I don't know," he replied, trying hard to think; "guess they haven't named it yet."

Then there are the *awful efforts*. One of these should be enough. A writer whose name is fairly well known (but which from courtesy to him is here withheld) went one day into a prominent New York bookshop for a chat with an accomplished bibliophile engaged there. A set of a new edition of Casanova had just come into the shop. The bookseller was eager to have this handsome affair shown to his friend. After looking over the volumes the visitor thanked the other for his attention to him, and in parting said: "I'm glad to have ob-scene that."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE RAMBLING SAILOR

by Charlotte Mew

IN the old back streets o' Pimlico
On the docks at Montevideo
At the Ring o' Bells on Plymouth Hoe
He'm arter me now wheerever I go;
An' dirty nights when the wind do blow
I can hear him singsongin' up from sea —:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Oh! no man nor woman's bin friend to me
An' today I'm feared wheer tomorrow I'll be,
Sin' the night the moon lay whist and white
On the road goin' down to the Lizard Light
When I heerd him hummin' behind me.

"Oh! look, boy, look in your sweetheart's eyes
So deep as sea an' so blue as skies;
An' 'tis better to kiss than to chide her,
If they tell 'ee no tales, they'll tell 'ee no lies
Of the little brown mouse
That creeps into the house
To lie sleepin' so quiet beside her.

Oh! hold 'ee long, but hold 'ee light
Your true mate's hand when you find him
He'll help 'ee home on a darksome night
Wi' a somethin' bright
That he'm holdin' tight
In the hand that he keeps behind him.

Oh! sit 'ee down to your whack o' pies
So hot's the stew an' the brew likewise
But whiles you'm scrapin' the plates an' dishes,
Agapin' down in the shiversome sea
For the delicate mossels inside o' we
Theer's a passel o' hungry fishes."

At the Halte des Marins at Saint-Nazaire
I cussed him, sittin' astride his chair;
An' Christmas Eve on the "Mary Clare"
I pitched him adown the hatchway stair.
But "Shoutin' an' cloutin's nothin' to me,
Nor the hop nor the skip nor the jump," says he,
"For I be walkin' on every quay —"

"So look, boy, look in the dear maid's eyes
An' take the true man's hand
An' eat your fill o' your whack o' pies
Till you'm starin' up wheer the sea crow flies
Wi' your head lyin' soft in the sand."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LONDONER

A Definitive Edition of Jane Austen--"George Bourne"--A Rival to "T. P.'s Weekly"--"The Nation"--Sidney Dark--"Vernon Lee"--The Philosophic Mind--Some English Savants, including Sir Israel Gollancz.

LONDON, *April* 1, 1923.

NOW that we are upon the verge of a great Jane Austen boom in England, there seems no end to the possibilities of new editions and reprints. By far the most important of these is the one announced by Humphrey Milford. It is the result of much work, and much love, on the part of several Austen enthusiasts. For one thing, the edition will give us what has long been needed — a good text of the novels. The editors have not been content to reproduce afresh all the old misprints and carelessnesses of the many inaccurate editions so long popular; they have really cared to go into the matter, and by precise collations, and the exercise of judgment, they are doing away with hoary old misreadings with a ruthlessness wholly worthy of the cause. Not only will the famous works be included, but also "Lady Susan" and the fragment of "The Watsons" about which I wrote a month or two ago. Moreover, the canceled chapter of "Persuasion" will find a place. This has a vital interest for all lovers of Jane Austen. The edition will be illustrated — not with pretty-pretty drawings which set the enthusiast's teeth upon edge, but with reproductions of contemporary pictures which will serve the purpose of showing exactly how Miss Bates and the Miss Dashwoods and the Miss Bennets were dressed. In every respect the set will be one to possess, even if there is no ultimate cheaper reprint, such as is desirable. I am told that there is a prospect that the Letters will eventually be added to the edition. This would be magnificent. The Letters are to all intents unprocurable nowadays, but copyright difficulties have prevented their being reissued hitherto. Owing to the smallness of the number of people who have read these letters they are persistently underrated. The truth is that when they were first estimated the taste in letter writing was in the direction of formality. Subsequent critics have therefore echoed the deprecating comments made at the time, without going to the trouble of judging for themselves. Let us once get these letters into circulation, and their freshness and vivacity will make them many constant readers. We are not so exacting nowadays in the matter of intimate correspondence. In fact, the less formal it is, the more we enjoy it.

* * * *

While Oxford is to give us this new edition of a classic novelist, Cambridge — by way of the corresponding Press — is announcing an impressive book which has something more than its historical interest. I refer to "The Wheelwright's Shop", by George Sturt. The additional interest lies in the fact that George Sturt is known already to the reading public under the name of "George Bourne". Under

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that pseudonym he has written a number of short volumes, studies of English village life, which good judges have placed among the "documents" of our time. George Sturt is the real name, and it is under this name that "The Wheelwright's Shop" will appear; but for most of us George Sturt will always be "George Bourne", and perhaps naturally. The writer is the brother of the bookseller at Farnham, a most agreeable little town in Surrey, on the road between Guildford and Winchester, which one reaches after a pleasant drive (with superb views) over the Hog's Back. The family of Sturt has for more than a century followed the craft of wheelwrighting, and "George Bourne" was actively engaged in that craft until only a few years back. He was quiet and observant, and wise with the wisdom of those who are able to think as they work. Arnold Bennett it was who told him he must write, and the notes he had been keeping of what, stealing one of "George Bourne's" own titles, I might call "change in the village", formed the basis of a series of volumes which record that change in personal as well as village life over a great many years. "The Bettesworth Book", "Memoirs of a Surrey Labourer", and so on have a value which it would be hard to exaggerate. Tame they may appear to eager searchers for diversion; but to those who would learn something of the form and pressure of the time they are of extreme interest. Less important, perhaps, but still very interesting, is "George Bourne's" æsthetic credo, "The Ascending Effort". The close weaving of this book makes it hard to read. I think, also, that many people, where they understood the book, would be tempted to disagree. Nevertheless, "The Ascending Effort" has some fine and refined thinking in it, and those who care for literature might do worse than devote time and trouble to the study of "George Bourne's" works. They can begin with "The Wheelwright's Shop", and go on to the others.

* * * *

We are at the present time threatened with a glut of weekly journals devoted to literature for the masses. We have in the past had "T. P.'s Weekly", which was started before the war by T. P. O'Connor; and since the war we have been living upon a sort of continuation of this journal called "John o' London's Weekly". John o' London, it should be explained for the benefit of those who do not recognize the pseudonym, is Wilfred Whitten, who wrote under that name for "T. P.'s Weekly". It was under the editorship of Whitten that "John o' London's Weekly" was started. The paper did not, I believe, however, attain its present enviable success in such proportions until the active and manysided Sidney Dark became associate editor. From that moment the paper has soared to a position of which its creators have every reason to be proud. It is read by an enormous number of book loving men and women who are not sufficiently "highbrow" to relish the more academic style of criticism of the weekly critical journals. One would have thought, therefore, that "John o' London's Weekly" held the field. No. Some time in last August, it seems, certain famous poets, playwrights, and critics were playing cricket in a Kentish village; and one of them, while taking off his pads (presumably he had just completed an innings, unless he had been keeping wicket), said suddenly: "I say, the public doesn't know us like this. Isn't it time we had a paper

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which would tell them we do other things than write? What we want is a paper which reflects the romance of life, a paper which is neither highbrow nor cheap, a paper which can be both popular in the best sense and critical in the best sense. It should be as responsible as a well played game of cricket — and as happy."

I suppose some people *do* talk like that, although it seems very unlikely. At any rate, the person to whom these egregious remarks were made did not, it appears, have the wit to reply, "John o' London's Weekly". Instead, he went off and founded "Cassell's Weekly", which, sure enough, is upon us. It is being very much advertised, and is securing as contributors most of the best known writers of the day. Its musical critic is Ernest Newman, who is certainly the most entertaining writer upon music in England. Professor Arthur Thomson and H. M. Tomlinson are also regular contributors. Sheila Kaye-Smith, Rebecca West, Arnold Bennett, Horace Annesley Vachell, and already many others have contributed stories or articles. If there is room for two such periodicals, then I think they might both do much good by interesting not very well educated people more and more in books. But I should be sorry to see "John o' London's Weekly", an old and tried friend, ousted by its young competitor. No doubt, as time goes on the two will become distinct. I wonder if the cricketer likes the result of his demand for a paper to show him as he is.

I was writing the other month about the new régime under which "The Nation" finds itself. What will happen here I do not know. Apparently there have been such reconsiderations that the old editorship has been retained for a further period. The assumption seems to be that H. W. Massingham will start a new weekly journal of his own, taking with him on to this paper the staff of "The Nation". I cannot suppose that this is a solution which is likely to satisfy all readers of "The Nation". Liberals — if there are any left — want something more than economics, however brilliant, while Massingham might lose for his new venture all that nucleus of a circulation which is composed of institutions, libraries, and subscribers who continue taking in a particular journal because they have been in the habit of doing so. This nucleus is a very important matter for any paper with a necessarily small circulation. Its existence explains why many old established journals change hands, when the obvious thing for journalistic adventurers would be to begin afresh and make their own paper from the start. The best solution, in my opinion, would be a continuance of the old "Nation" under the old control. As the stranger who interrupted a conversation with a request for a loan, and was refused, said: "Well, let's forget all that, and I'm a gentleman again." In all probability there will be another mess up, due to the English custom of being "dignified" at crucial moments. Dignified and loyal. Loyalty has been the rock which has wrecked liberalism in this country, and dignity is the ally of loyalty. Unfortunately the loyalty and dignity are those of children.

* * * *

When I spoke above about "John o' London's Weekly" I mentioned that the associate editor of the paper was Sidney Dark. Dark has had a varied journalistic career. He was for a long time the literary editor of "The Daily Express", and he then was that paper's representative at the Peace Conference. He has written novels,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

histories, and all sorts of other things. Dark, I believe, is taking an active part in the preparation of the new "Outline of Literature". He has been writing histories of France and England for the young; and is said to be engaged upon a much needed work dealing with Gilbert and Sullivan opera. If the latter report is true, and the book is written "con brio", so to speak, it should be a very desirable affair. How strange it is that we have had to wait for an adequate book upon the subject of these operas until now! Books have been written, of course, but not good books — at least, I must qualify that by admitting that I have not seen a small study by H. M. Walbrook, published last year — and yet the subject is one which I should have supposed attractive to all sorts of talented men and women. When I am in a bad mood, which is when I feel malicious, I take up a most astounding work alleged to have been written by François Cellier and Cunningham Bridgeman. The hand throughout the first part of the book may be, as is alleged, the hand of Cellier, but the voice, the extraordinary voice, is that of Bridgeman. It is incredible. I will quote a portion, making the reservation that my copy of "Gilbert, Sullivan, and D'Oyly Carte" is not to be lent. Of "The Yeoman of the Guard", Mr. Bridgeman writes:

> "The Yeoman" marked a very distinct departure. It seemed to indicate that Gilbert had, at last, determined upon breaking in his fiery, untamed steed. The poet had bridled and brought Pegasus down from the Helicon of unrealities to the plains of earth. Henceforth — at any rate for a while — he would canter gently on *terra firma* without appalling the senses of ordinary mortals. But the spoilt pet of Gilbert's muse chafed beneath the curb. Every now and then he seemed disposed to show the cloven hoof. Pegasus was unwilling to remain in this dull, unpoetic sphere of ours.
>
> But Gilbert had come to realise that his best friends wanted to see and hear more of him and from a different aspect. They had been fondly hoping that some day the gifted Savoyard would hold the mirror up to nature; not one of those terrible concave or convex quick-silver'd libellers that distort the forms of the noblest of men and the features of the fairest of women, but a perfect plate-glass, bevelled-edged mirror that should reflect people and things as they really are. . . .
>
> From a casket full of such rich gems it is not easy to select one more lustrous than another. But as a sample of exquisite coquetry, as an illustration of the wiles of a saucy maiden humouring, to his destruction, the attentions of a repulsive wooer, let me commend that delightful comedy scene between Phœbe Meryll and Wilfred Shadbolt, the baboonish jailer.

And so on. I am sure Mr. Dark's book will not be in the least like that.

* * * *

"Vernon Lee" (Miss Paget), whose new book, "The Handling of Words", has just had the honor of a front page article in "The Times Literary Supplement", lives in Florence, although she paid London one of her periodical visits last year. As the character of the book shows — a good part of it is given up to the analysis, the damning analysis, of the grammar and composition of certain persons of importance — Miss Paget looks upon the writing of English from the point of view of the conscious grammarian. Prepositions, conjunctions, moods, tenses, nouns, verbs, all are a part of her quarry in reading the work of a famous writer. Could you read in that spirit of analytical observation? I could not. I could not enjoy any book once I began to be aware of the author's literary manner. I cannot read Meredith now for the reason that his style is an irritation. Probably Miss Paget only does it to annoy, because she knows it teases. But what vigor, what intrepidity does this really veteran writer show! When one thinks that she was writing a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most learned book about Italian art, literature, and history while still in her teens, that she has been writing since in various fields, including that of fiction, until her list of works — and in particular their numerous and in some cases abstract themes — causes the mind to falter, it is impossible to withhold great admiration. Throughout the war, owing to her many friends among the Germans, she held views which were unpopular; her "Ballet of the Nations" was a mordant satire upon militarism and international politics; yet she maintained her wide sympathies, her relentless intellectual curiosity, at a high pitch throughout. It was in the war period that I made the acquaintance of "Vernon Lee". I was taken to her house by a friend when she was staying in Chelsea. We spoke of the war, of books, of national character. Upon all these topics the small, masculinely dressed lady with grey hair and quietly determined manner expressed herself with assurance but with the greatest courtesy. I do not recollect the detail of the conversation, in spite of a memory of its interest. Accordingly I take it that "Vernon Lee" is not a wit. I did, however, learn from my friend's subsequent remark that Miss Paget was famous as a talker, and that she had been "in good form". What a pity that when one meets somebody who talks well there should be no means of recording the talk, otherwise than by such betraying memory as one has! I have the picture of a small, straight, tweed coated figure, of a starched collar, of keen eyes and a face that was not pale; I can hear a soft, deep voice which was still not manly; and every word that was said has gone completely from me. But you had the impression of a mind that gripped everything with confidence, obviously well trained, ordered, powerful. Not, however, a very open mind, I should say; but one that was ready to attribute dishonesty or stupidity to an opponent. I mean, that Miss Paget would listen, and would then, to one's fear and astonishment, interpret what one had said with the skill of a manipulator of clay. The remark suffered a change; its meaning was absorbed into Miss Paget's continuous and able argument. Probably the philosophic mind does not waver, largely because its owner is only half prepared to listen. That is, if one has a mind already made up about most things in heaven and earth, the objections that come from outside are things to be dealt with firmly, and not things to be digested at leisure. The point is an interesting one, for a reason which I will state.

Readers of Arnold Bennett's "Things That Have Interested Me, Second Series" will have remarked in the essay upon W. H. R. Rivers which I mentioned last month how Bennett told Rivers that the novelist was condemned to know nothing. Rivers agreed. Bennett's remark was that of a man who desires certainty. It was that of a born moral dogmatist. But Bennett, by the laws of his being, is really open minded. He could not otherwise have been a great novelist. The truth about that little conversation is not that the novelist is condemned to know nothing, but that the novelist is condemned to be always seeking knowledge outside a system. The novelist is not a philosopher. Directly he makes up his mind to teach a moral lesson, he becomes a second class novelist. The play of sympathy, in virtue of which he is a novelist, prevents him from running intellectually to system. He has no cer-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tainty, because he has no limitation other than the range of his sympathy. But whether the formal thinker is better than the man who creates by means of understanding more flexible, more sympathetic and responsive than the tramline extension of logical or systematic thought, I could not attempt to determine. I only know that the conversation of philosophers is apt to tire me and to prove of less interest, on the whole, than the conversation of novelists. Some novelists are among the best talkers I have ever met. There seems to be no end to the ingenuity, the subtlety, the entertainingness of their minds. To say that they are not systematic thinkers is not really to brand them as ignorant, as incapable of knowing. It is to admit that the novelist has a roving license among the things of the mind and heart. I am sorry that Bennett, from his customary politeness and modesty, should have seemed to throw the novelist's sponge into the ring. I hope to be quick enough to snatch it back again before anybody notices its presence in the ring.

* * * *

A body of English savants is coming to the United States to confer with similar bodies of American savants. Would that I might be there. I should like to hear savants conferring. I do not know yet the precise constitution of the body which, like that of the Pilgrim Fathers, is to set out from this country. I know, however, that two of the number will be Sir Israel Gollancz and Professor Grierson of Edinburgh University. Both of these men, highly characteristic of our university system, should make many friends in the United States. Professor Grierson is a fine scholar, who thinks Dickens the last word in the English novel, but who nevertheless has been bold enough to award the Tait Black Prize to Hugh Walpole and D. H. Lawrence in successive years for the best English novel published in the year in question. For a professor of English literature to award any prize to Lawrence shows amazing intelligence. You would know that Grierson was a professor by looking at him for the first time; but what you might not at the first glance discover is that he is a man of considerable humor. It is scholastic, or rather, academic humor, a little rusted by exposure to the air of the lecture room; but it is genuine; and I expect he will speak admirable sense with a good deal of ripe facetiousness. Sir Israel Gollancz, on the other hand, is a plump and very short sighted man who is also a wit. He is indescribably slow and benign in manner, with a soft, glutinous voice. He is better in conversation than on the platform, where his manner, formed for intimate jesting, loses some of its essential volume and accordingly flattens. In talk, however, he is delightful. I can remember, many years ago, hearing a man who was exasperated beyond all measure at Sir Israel's dilatoriness and slowness of method and manner, cry in rage: "Look here, Professor, I'm going to chain you!" "Chain me," came Sir Israel's thick, drawling reply; "why you might as well talk of chaining the wind!" For years and years, he has been translating and retranslating the famous Middle English poem of "Pearl". He has carried the poem with him wherever he went, has emended, reconsidered, and revised his gem. He was doing it at the beginning of the century, and the book at last was published in 1922. His enthusiasm for Shakespeare is no less. Sir Israel it was who edited the great

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

little Temple Shakespeare, published on this side by Dent and in America by the Macmillan Company. Pirated also by various firms. He founded the Temple Classics, one of the best of the series of cheap and prettily produced reprints which have unfortunately been crowded out of the market by series less scholarly and less delectable in style. When lamentable divergences of opinion, which were carried to the law courts, arose between Gollancz and Dent, the former began the publication of a new series, "The King's Classics", in which, again, may be found invaluable reprints of books not otherwise available for the ordinary reader. The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre is another enthusiasm of this indefatigable man. Indefatigable, but singularly slow. Enthusiastic, but perhaps not vigorous enough to carry through his schemes with the energy of their inception. There are many such men, pure gold, without alloy — without that hard admixture which would make of them genuine leaders of their age. I can see the American savants having a merry and entertaining time during the whole of this visit. I suspect, however, that they will have to provide a pretty exacting schedule, and that they will have to know very clearly beforehand what they want done if anything is to be done at all. But perhaps the purpose of such conferences is not to carry through vigorously any scheme, but only to provide an opportunity for agreeable meetings and happy hours. If so, then this conference will be an enormous success. I can guarantee it, without knowing what other members of the English learned and professorial world are to be present.

SIMON PURE

HOMESICK

By Robert J. Roe

I AM eager to be housed
Within the melodious
Structure of your voice.
I am aching to lay me down
In the tranquil place
Of your thoughts.

Oh, not too easy I come
But hurried and worrying you. . . .

Like cries and love words
I rush to your lips very fierce
And leave them weary
And lax and dreamy
Fit to sleep hard
Along the ivory paneled bench.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

XX: *BRANDER MATTHEWS*

With a Caricature by William Gropper

THE year 1922 was an *annus mirabilis* in many ways. One of the most unexpected occurrences was the inexplicable departure of Professor James Brander Matthews from the weekly book review of our largest daily newspaper. Professor Matthews had been like death and taxes in one respect. He was always with us. Fifty-two times a year his name was to be discerned appended to printed matter in the New York "Times Book Review". This matter took various forms. Sometimes it seemed to be a review of a current publication. At other times it wasn't. Professor Matthews's article could often be identified by certain phrases. One of them was "Forty years ago, etc." Another was the quotation of Jules Lemaître's fallacious but epigrammatic, "Criticism of our contemporaries is not criticism, it is only conversation." No epigram, of course, can be more than partially true; its very neatness defeats its own logic. But for Professor Matthews this statement by a distinguished Frenchman was the text of his life. He made his literary existence a long sermon in defense of it.

When Professor Matthews was not writing a review (he insists, quite rightly, that he does not write criticism) he was enlarging upon M. Lemaître's epigram. When he was not doing this he was rewriting himself. He made quaint admissions. He affirmed that he did not have time to read the younger men, but nevertheless he could not sleep for the horrendous tocsin of revolt that reechoed in the streets adjacent to his mossy tower. Because of his attitude toward the younger men Professor Matthews is an important figure in current letters. His humanity is charming. He is so much what one would expect a representative of the older order to be that most of the younger generation experience a warming of the cockles of the heart when they think of him. It is true that they do not think of him very often, not so often, for instance, as they think of Stuart P. Sherman, but this is mainly because of Professor Matthews's repetitiousness. He scrapes away on the same old fiddle at the same old tune, and the younger generation (not barbarians really but rather nice young men who are mostly guilty of the attempt to think for themselves) know it by heart.

Professor Matthews was the Jeremiah of the New York "Times Book Review". He did not criticize; he judged. His weekly articles were the dumplings in the stew. About them gathered the beefy chunks of Dr. Maurice Francis Egan, the carrots of Professor William Lyons Phelps, the parsnips of Austin Hay, the Irish potatoes of Herbert S. Gorman, and the thin gravy of Richard Le Gallienne.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brander Matthews

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Now and again the concoction was enlivened by a dash of paprika from Benjamin De Casseres, who ate the mystics and was mad. The dish was quaint and one can but note with some consternation that it exists no longer.

Professor Matthews as the dumpling in the stew was naturally in a position of some importance. It is to be suspected that he had merely to nod his head toward a certain book and that book leaped toward him on the wings of the parcel post. His range of enthusiasms extended from Gelett Burgess's idea of "Æsop's Fables" to Gilbert Murray's Greek theories. Poetry of the lighter sort (vers de société) titillated him. Now this was but natural, for is not Professor Matthews himself the author of that deathless panegyric to the young Yankee maiden? Lest any of the younger generation have failed to memorize this effort it is drawn from its obscurity and set down here.

AN AMERICAN GIRL

She's had a Vassar education,
  And points with pride to her degrees;
She's studied household decoration;
  She knows a dado from a frieze,
  And tells Corots from Boldonis;
A Jacquemart etching, or a Haden,
  A Whistler, too, perchance might please
A free and frank young Yankee maiden.

She does not care for meditation;
  Within her bonnet are no bees;
She has a gentle animation,
  She joins in singing simple glees.
  She tries no trills, no rivalries
With Lucca (now Baronin Raden),
  With Nilsson or with Gerster; she's
A frank and free young Yankee maiden.

I'm blessed above the whole creation,
  Far, far above all other he's;
I ask you for congratulation
  On this the best of jubilees:
  I go with her across the seas
Unto what Poe would call an Aiden, —
  I hope no serpent's there to tease
A frank and free young Yankee maiden.

Envoy

Princes, to you the western breeze
  Bears many a ship and heavy laden.
What is the best we send in these?
  A free and frank young Yankee maiden.

Can one read this without affection for Professor Matthews? One wonders if he was not the F. Scott Fitzgerald of his day, and yet there is a certain naïveté that precludes any such opinion. Professor Matthews was and is as naïve as Jackie Coogan. Yet behind his unsophisticated humanity is a sound and important intellect. He has written admirably about Molière and Shakespeare. His scholarship in certain lines must remain unchallenged. His naïveté rests in his inability to understand when it is time to stop and where he should pause. He protests, without much reason, when the younger generation fails to adapt its pace to his. He belongs to the Bunner school of letters (a school that played delightfully and superficially with life) but he does not quite accept the fact that that movement is a thing of the past. They were gentle scholars, sound and sunny and sometimes close to saccharinity. One can but note with regret that the sweetness once implicit in Professor Matthews's work has grown a bit acidulous. This is mainly because he insists upon concerning himself with a modern movement of mind and spirit with which he has nothing in common. His blood does not tingle to that tocsin which he hears so loudly ringing in the streets of his Little Old New York. A new race has sprung up about him with other dreams. They are not interested in the things about which Professor Matthews's mind revolves. They don't care about Jules Lemaître's epigrams. They can roll their own.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Professor Matthews has written more than one article (or rather he has rewritten the same article several times) striving doggedly to prove that book reviewing and criticism are two separate things. Very well. They are. Very well. They aren't. It is simple enough to grant that a book review is not necessarily criticism and it is equally simple to grant that criticism is not necessarily a book review. But when Professor Matthews asserts, as he does, that a book review may not be a criticism if it is concerned with a book by a contemporary author, he is merely expressing a personal opinion that other readers are not bound to accept. The idea that one may not criticize one's contemporaries because, presumably, of the nearness of the subject and the consequent lack of proper perspective, is a controversial subject with as much evidence on one side as on the other. Certainly Ben Jonson's opinion of Shakespeare *(his* contemporary, Professor Matthews will grant) has not been seriously destroyed as a piece of criticism by subsequent Shakespearian scholars. This is a subject assuredly in which one example will serve to destroy Professor Matthews's argument. If it has been done once it may be done again, and one does not need to search the archives of literature for an abundance of examples. So much has been written about this attitude of Professor Matthews that the foregoing statements are designed, not to destroy his attitude — for that would take an article in itself — but to illustrate one facet of his mind which is revelatory of his character. Professor Matthews is dogmatic, settled in his convictions, and not open to argument. He knows what he thinks; his opinions crystallized years ago; and the shiftings and fluctuations of the intellectual world have not moved him from his sturdy stand. He is in himself an epitome of that older order that grudgingly observes the younger generation and slams a ponderous fist upon it almost as soon as it opens its infant mouth.

It is futile for the older order to summon up a smile and assert that it does not deprecate the younger generation, that it likes youth and the thoughts that go with youth, and that it views with disapproval only the aberrations of the younger generation, the false experimentations and elaborate extravagances, etc. For the older order the younger generation itself is an aberration. The older order likes its own scheme of things and measures all movements accordingly. It is not qualified to judge either the merits or demerits of the experimentations of the younger generation, for it cannot enter into the spirit of them. It stands outside and observes objectively. The turmoil of the spirit, the urge to discovery and self-expression that lead the younger generation into such queer paths are meaningless gestures to the older order whose traveling days are done, whose roads have been made smooth in the days when its members were too young to realize that they themselves moved through the disadvantages and obstacles of a still older order. Castle after castle crashes down and the progress of art continues. No one generation can affirm that it has reached the appointed goal. The secret of great art is that the goal is never reached.

These are the things that Professor Matthews does not understand, and so clearly defined is his position that he is a welcome signpost for the younger generation. That much maligned group is glad to have him there, for he stands for the outworn things that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have hardened, that have perished from a spiritual arteriosclerosis. It is futile for Professor Matthews or any representative of the older order to assert that the younger men are contemptuously flinging aside Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante, Shelley, and such divine constellations as squeezed oranges, for this has never been the case. The younger generation is as reverend as any where genius is concerned and past achievements are still past achievements. The difference between the older order and the younger generation is that the youthful group is not content to retravel roads that long ago were exhausted, to bask itself in an old tradition which indubitably has its place in the whole perspective of world literature but which is nothing more than a starting point for younger feet. The younger generation cannot think Professor Matthews's thoughts and exist; it would automatically destroy itself in the attempt.

Various tales (which may not be true) have arisen from Professor Matthews's attitude toward life and letters. There is the one about the young student taking his father's notebooks to a class conducted by Professor Matthews and discovering that he need take no new notes. Even the jokes fell in the same places. There is also the tale regarding Professor Matthews's explanation that he could not lecture on Emerson to his class as he had neglected to bring his notes along. These stories are possibly mere apocrypha, jaunty dramatizations of an atmosphere by impertinent youths, but they serve to show what Professor Matthews and all that he stands for suggest to the younger men.

He is the essentially personal prophet of the older order. Anything that he considers derogatory to the fetishes of his youth (which have remained fetishes all his life) he takes as a personal matter. An insult to Emerson is an insult to him. One can but observe this militant oldster (born in 1852) with admiration as he sallies into the vexed arena of modern letters bearing his frayed gonfalon. He will die fighting and he will die with the respect of the younger generation, for his sincerity is undoubted and in spite of criticism the younger men revere sincerity. But he will not be taken seriously, since he never possessed any value as a constructive thinker. His literary animosities rather reveal this deficiency. The tocsin of revolt peals in his streets of the mind and he rushes forth; but he is neither trampled upon nor thrust aside by the impatient youngsters who follow the alarum of that bell. They merely dart past him and far up the street. Farther than Professor Matthews's eyesight carries, he may hear the shouting of the young warriors.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Plays and Motion Pictures of the Month

By John Farrar

PLAYS IN NEW YORK WORTH SEEING

1. ICEBOUND: *A New England family makes rich background for a combination of the Cinderella and the Prodigal Son stories.*

2. ZANDER THE GREAT: *Alice Brady surrounded by bootlegging ranchmen adds not only gaiety but a fine performance to the season. (Reviewed below.)*

3. MERTON OF THE MOVIES: *A satirical drama of success in the movies, endowed with real pathos by the deft Glenn Hunter's characterization.*

4. ROMEO AND JULIET: *Jane Cowl and Rollo Peters add zest and some beauty to Mr. Shakespeare's play of young love.*

5. RAIN: *The South Seas, and much trouble between sex and religion, give Jeanne Eagels a chance to act as she never acted before—which she does.*

6. THE LAUGHING LADY: *Not unlike "Déclassé", this Sutro comedy is not so good. Ethel Barrymore is, however, so there you are!*

7. THE OLD SOAK: *An appreciation of fine whisky might be called the motivation of this rather mellow play of the "Lightnin'" variety.*

8. YOU AND I: *Social comedy which is genuinely American, genuinely humorous, and has been cast with taste and directed with skill.*

9. THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE: *This fantasy of Sir Arthur Wing Pinero's has beauty, pathos, and several fine performances. (Reviewed below.)*

10. *For musical comedies we recommend* LITTLE NELLIE KELLY, UP SHE GOES, THE CLINGING VINE, *and* ELSIE *(reviewed below). They are all much alike in that they are fairly good comedies, with humor, good music, good acting, and good dancing.*

IN the spring the playwright's fancy seems to be occupied with—thoughts of melodrama! Melodrama it is, this year; and how many of us would cheer if these were only good melodramas, not hidden under other names, but honest workmanlike thrillers. This tendency toward the sensational perhaps means a healthy reaction from realism, from the school of St. John Ervine, or from that of the Russians. It is comparable to the success of the costume novels of Mr. Sabatini, or of Irving Bacheller's "In the Days of Poor Richard". We have been led back to the improbabilities of the overmelodramatic through the vogue of the mystery play. A good thriller was, of course, always acceptable, but somehow, in these days of Theatre Guilds and American National Theatres, one does not expect such a flock of them. I have seen eleven new plays this month. Of them, three are musical comedies, one a fantasy, one an attempt at the deeper drama, and six, indubitably, melodrama.

Mrs. Fiske, perverse, brilliant, her

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

technique at its height, has come and gone in "The Dice of the Gods" by Lillian Barrett, one of the three plays that this month attempted to put back on Broadway stars who had not been seen there for a season or more. This story of an indigent society lady who does not follow any particularly definite moral code, and seeks her release by a frequent use of morphine, was not built for success. Even a performance said by those who know to have been one of Mrs. Fiske's best, could not save it, any more than Laurette Taylor's work could save the unfortunate "Humoresque". To trust in a vehicle instead of a play is a dangerous undertaking. Here was a series of tragic, comic, grandiloquent vaudeville moments for this amazingly kittenish dope fiend who, in spite of cruelties, petty thefts, and other indecencies, still remains beloved until she pulls a couch cover over her face and dies one of the really fine stage deaths of the year — a suicide, by the way. It is high tribute to the art of this great actress that she made Patricia Baird, "Paddy" for short, live at all. Other lines of the play, falling to far less adept tongues, fell much further than that. The play was frankly morbid. It was a study of abnormal psychology. As such, it might at least have achieved a *succès d'estime;* but when glazed by mock sentiment and creaking dialogue, it gave us another chance to see what exceedingly good things Mrs. Fiske can do with an exceedingly bad play.

Another herculean task was intrusted to Cyril Maude when he was asked to make the long suffering Mark Sabre achieve the proportions of a human being in the dramatization of A. S. M. Hutchinson's "If Winter Comes". As in the case of most dramatized novels, there is too much story to tell. In this instance the melodrama is so elaborate that most of the whimsicality that made the book charming goes by the way. Sabre, however, returning from the front, greeting the two famous servants "High Jinks" and "Low Jinks", is human, humorous, and delightfully played by Mr. Maude. At other times he is not so successful. I cannot believe in his forgiving nature at the end of the play, when we are asked to countenance his letting the double dyed villain go free because that villain's son has just been killed at the front. I never did believe most of the climax of the novel, anyway. The courtroom scene, where the accusation of murder and the cruelty of middle class respectability reach the top of their crescendo over poor Sabre's head, is improbable but, curiously enough, in Mr. Maude's hands is moving. "If Winter Comes" is, like "The Dice of the Gods", neither a very good vehicle nor a good play; but it is saved from too great dulness by excellent playing, and more especially by the always mellow and sometimes sparkling Cyril Maude.

The third vehicle for the third star has proved more satisfying. Salisbury Field's comedy melodrama "Zander the Great" is obvious enough; but it is written with humor, faithfulness, and discretion. It has given Alice Brady the chance to prove that she is not only an emotional actress of depth and power but a comédienne of a rare fantastic quality, and a character actress whose telling work in the case of Mamie Adams is little short of perfect. "Zander" is the story of a little housekeeper of Weeweegin, New Jersey, who with the child of her dead mistress crosses the continent in a Ford to find the waif's father. Arizona yields bootlegging, tears, and romance to both Mamie and the child.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The bootlegging twist makes the old western story live again. Mr. Field has not overlooked the never failing formula of "a little child shall lead them", and it has worked successfully. I saw Madame Réjane only once, and then shortly before her death; but, with youth and beauty, Alice Brady must be what the young Réjane was. She has piquancy, sweetness, an extraordinary vocal range, passion, magnetism, and, when need be, restraint. So great is her variety as Mamie Adams, she is so many women in one, that one practically forgets that she is the only woman in this fairly large cast of men. Mr. Field has drawn his cowboy types well. He has written a play not so deft as his "Wedding Bells", but unquestionably of a more popular character. It is a fairly good vehicle and, having found Miss Brady, it becomes great entertainment.

Sir Arthur Wing Pinero's "The Enchanted Cottage", as produced in America, is a moving and a beautiful play. He has chosen fantasy to cover a delicate and a tragic social problem, i. e. the disposition which is to be made of the returned disabled or disfigured soldier. His answer is an old and a simple one, "Love heals all things", or more specifically here, "In the eyes of Love all things are beautiful." An unattractive spinster marries a nervous wreck of a war hero. It is a marriage for the sake of mutual aid and comfort. Under the spell of discovering that they love each other, husband and wife believe for a time that by some witchery, magic, or miracle, they have actually become beautiful. Their disillusionment is handled in a finely moving scene and the ending, which some have called sentimental, seems to me only to be tender. No New York critic, so far as I know, reviewed this play without referring

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Contemporary American Plays" edited by Arthur Hobson Quinn (Scribner). Five of the best recent dramas, with an intelligent introductory essay on "The American Drama" which ends: "There is no lack of playwrights, of actors, or of producers — it is for the American public to decide whether its national drama is to fail or to succeed."

"Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary" by St. John Ervine (Macmillan). Frothy, rather delightful comedy concerning a temperamental actress and her reactions to a staid community, or vice versa.

"The Dramatic Works of Lyof N. Tolstöi" translated by Nathan Haskell Dole (Crowell). Competent translations of the great Russian's moral dramas which we hope will not too greatly influence young American playwrights.

"Sandro Botticelli" by Mercedes de Acosta (Moffat, Yard). A somewhat stilted telling of the Botticelli legend, with moments of beauty.

"Plays of G. Martínez Sierra" in English versions by John Garrett Underhill and Helen and Harley Granville-Barker (Dutton). Two volumes of interesting if somewhat literary plays.

"The Torch-Bearers" by George Kelly (Amer. Library Serv.). This successful burlesque of amateur acting now goes out to the amateur himself — and will doubtless be acted by many a little theatre company with a sense of humor.

"Polly With a Past and Adam and Eva" by George Middleton and Guy Bolton (Holt). These two commercial successes reveal themselves as containing much good dialogue and a deal of amusement.

"Mumbo Jumbo" by Henry Clews, Junior (Boni, Liveright). An elaborate and creaking Shavian satire which might be excellent were it not so pretentious.

"Hilda" by Frances Guignard Gibbes (Brentano). Little drama and no poetry in this so called poetic drama.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to Mr. Barrie. Most of them, apparently, felt that Pinero's conception lacked what Barrie might have given it. Heywood Broun remarked that he didn't know why it was the play moved him so when, obviously, it was filled with heavy footed humor and clumsy imagery. So often, both in books and on the stage, it seems to me that the very details to which we take exception are those which give the whole its quality. Pinero, it is true, occasionally gives way to stage humor, particularly in the first act where a plaster of Paris rector, his wife, and the parents of the hero chat in a manner which reminds one of "Sweet Lavender" and of the more obvious tricks of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray". The fantastic scenes, however, seem to me to have been conceived and executed with uncanny skill. Laura dreams. She is a simple woman, with simple ideas, and the dream scene, filled with children, demons, witches, and a hodgepodge of what she has been thinking during the day, is probably *exactly* what she would have dreamed. That's why it's so moving, Mr. Broun. It is not fantasy. It is *realism* — the best kind. Whether or not this is the age of miracles, I do not know. Suffice it to say that Katharine Cornell as the now pathetic, now radiant Laura, is little short of miraculous. This play of weddings and young love is a fine thing for springtime. Sentimental? Perhaps. Why not? This too great quarrel with sentiment is always a sign of decadence. There is nothing decadent about Sir Arthur's "The Enchanted Cottage".

We are now plunged into the sea of melodrama. From "The Wasp" I came up gasping. Here was an old-fashioned thriller with a thunderbolt, a near rape, and a lady accused of murder who blushes when she tries to tell her husband that she's about to give him a little . . . (she turns her head away). One of the most preposterous plays it has been my pleasure to see; but I must say its suspense was excellent, not from any inherent quality of the play itself but just because I wondered what possible sin against the laws of drama could be next displayed. All were present, I think, before the final curtain.

"Uptown, West", with Henry Herbert playing superbly the Japanese husband of an American wife, has very definite virtues. The first act, which is simply a west side apartment house of any evening, with the janitor's daughter and a neighbor furnishing excellent atmosphere, is as exciting as any first act I have seen this year. Suspense is created by the slightest and most commonplace events: the turning of a picture to the wall, a nervous gesture. This must be the perfection of technique. The second act, like most acts where the climax happens offstage and the Greek messenger device is employed, proves dull. The last act, with its fortuitous and bloody ending — which, in spite of all the gore, is in a sense happy — seems to send the audience away thrilled and satisfied. It is a pity that a dope fiend was necessary to make this thriller fashionable.

"Within Four Walls" is several melodramas in one. It is all about what went on through the ages in the old Minuit House. Helen Ware is effective. Lacking, however, any suspense from scene to scene, the play drags. If the production had been smoother, and the atmosphere of other days more carefully planted, this might have been a novelty of some charm. As it is, with the exception of one real thrill, when Miss Ware as a mulatto kills her former lover, the effect is dull.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The Exile", a romantic drama of revolutionary France by Sidney Toler, is decorated by Eleanor Painter and her songs, and played with romantic vigor by the always competent and, in this case, fiery José Ruben. I had a good time at "The Exile". Creaky in construction, shopworn in its events, it yet has a thrill that almost any story of the days of Marie Antoinette's downfall has always had for me. It is a play written about Rouget de l'Isle and his "Marseillaise". It is a play in which the bells of La Madeleine mingle with the sound of guns, the shouts of marching crowds, and the clash of swords. The final curtain is worth the price of admission. I have a suspicion that this type of good old costume melodrama is out of style, and I'm exceedingly sorry.

Musical comedies are becoming swifter and swifter. The pace of the new negro review, "How Come", is so high that I left the theatre breathless and bewildered. I suspect that there are good songs; but they were played so fast that I can't remember a single melody. The dancing was excellent. I don't think the humor was good; but after all it was used only as a hasty background for the flying legs of an unusually large and restless chorus. "Cinders", which is Cinderella and a crook dilemma combined with music, is not so rapid. "Elsie" is an amusing comedy, and it is so well played and danced by everyone, including an entrancing new comédienne, Luella Gear, that we have many thanks for an entertaining afternoon. The tuneful (that is the word, isn't it?) songs were played slowly enough to enable me, since then, to hum two of them.

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES

1. THE COVERED WAGON: *Stirring, beautiful, almost epic in quality is this picturization of Emerson Hough's story.*

2. DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS: *A tale of whaling days which, while not important as a story, is as thrilling in sea atmosphere as any romance by Conrad or Melville.*

3. THE BRIGHT SHAWL: *Shorn of its main idea, Joseph Hergesheimer's novel becomes a swift romance in a beautiful setting, and gives Richard Barthelmess a chance to fight the best of his series of movie fights, even though it's a losing one. (Reviewed below.)*

A STARRING vehicle in the motion pictures seems to me to be impossible—also real acting in the movies, or much acting at any rate. Compare, for example, Pola Negri in "Bella Donna" and Rupert Hughes's "Souls for Sale". No amount of beauty, posing, or attitudinizing in the most vampire like lines has enabled Miss Negri to create excitement in what, to me, at least, is a drab picture. I suspect that there are very few people who know the tricks of continuity writing. If "Souls for Sale" is an example, Rupert Hughes does. He is also a director of something like genius. This defense of Hollywood, aside from being clever journalism, clever propaganda, and a workable story, is never for an instant flagging in interest. There are thrills for nearly every taste. The storm and the burning of the great circus tent

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are superb. The handling of the crowds is masterly. There is nothing particularly noble about "Souls for Sale" except some of the photography; but it is good entertainment.

"The Nth Commandment", from a story of Fanny Hurst's, is slightly vulgar and slightly sentimental in the worst sense. It is the tale of a department store, and the types are well drawn and well acted. I liked particularly the skating rink scenes. Jackie Coogan, sobbing his way through "Daddy", is again the best child of them all. His moments of humor are so fine that it is a pity he must always be furnished with dramas of heart-throbs and tears. However, this is but natural. The greatest public for any child actor would be the one which likes best to feel motherly. "Daddy" is a good picture of its kind.

"Glimpses of the Moon", from Edith Wharton's novel, proved only what a poor novel it was for Mrs. Wharton to have written. In spite of gorgeous scenery, luxurious castles, Bebe Daniels and the exotic Nita Naldi wearing the clothes which were supposed to make society ladies of them, nothing could conceal the fact that practically no one in the picture, with the possible exception of the wronged husband, was anything but a bounder. The audible thrill of recognition from the audience, which greeted a greyed but still handsome Maurice Costello in this picture, was interesting.

Hergesheimer's "The Bright Shawl" makes an excellent picture. The curious inverted quality of the book is, of course, completely missing. Richard Barthelmess has no conflict of ideals or emotions. The love story works out quite comfortably, if somewhat fortuitously. Personally, we could have wished for a somewhat more impassioned La Clavel; but Miss Gish is very lovely and shakes her head charmingly. The setting of Cuba was actual, and therefore could scarcely be more realistic. This is, I think, a thoroughly satisfactory moving picture version of a novel. Barthelmess is always a satisfying hero, and his sword duel has several thrills.

HATE

By Jeannette Marks

LONG long ago his hate flowed fast,
Folding like leaves before a stealthy wind;
And long ago its tide slid to the deep
Sucking the painted seaweed from the sand, —
Long long ago!

And now nothing at all writhes in her mind,
And long ago her heart forgot in sleep
The high wild cry that crossed the land
Bearing on frigate wings the coiling past, —
Long long ago!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Monthly Book Bulletin", McClurg's "Monthly Bulletin of New Books", and* "THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.*

MARRIAGE, SHORT STORIES OF MARRIED LIFE—American Writers—*Doubleday, Page.* The lighter aspects of connubial bliss (and otherwise) by one bachelor, one spinster, and eighteen who know.

MANY MARRIAGES—Sherwood Anderson—*Knopf.* The psychopathic meanderings of one Webster who believes in tearing off both clothes and social conventions.

THE HOUSE ON SMITH SQUARE—Anonymous—*Duffield.* The author must have an intimate knowledge of England's inner politics to write as knowingly as he does.

WEST OF THE WATER TOWER—Anonymous—*Harper.* Public opinion in a Missouri prairie town makes the man pay as well as the woman, and lets them live it down later.

*BLACK OXEN—Gertrude Atherton—*Boni, Liveright.* Mrs. Atherton's fifty-eight year old feminine Ponce de Leon is more successful in her quest of the fountain of youth.

THE GRAYS—Charlotte Bacon—*Putnam.* A long-winded book whose characters all take their tone from the title.

THE DIM LANTERN—Temple Bailey—*Penn.* "And now she was coming and they would pick roses together in the garden. And love and life would minister to a greater mystery." Saccharine romance while Philomel sings.

COUNTRY CLUB PEOPLE—Margaret Culkin Banning—*Doran.* Those "Cytherea" people more recognizably presented but with, perhaps, too much typicalness and too little individuality.

THE CHASTE DIANA—E. Barrington—*Dodd, Mead.* The star of "The Beggar's Opera", spurner of Lord Baltimore, companion without benefit of clergy to the Duke of Bolton, is entirely charming but alas too saintlike to be real.

MURDO—Konrad Bercovici—*Boni, Liveright.* Again this writer makes one love the gipsy, much as George Borrow did, though Bercovici adds plot to atmosphere.

THE GREAT GRANDMOTHER—G. A. Birmingham—*Bobbs-Merrill.* After many thrilling experiences Great Grandmother is finally sold and hung in England, thereby bringing happiness and plenty to the house of Coppinger—oh, Great Grandmother was a genuine Gainsborough!

BLACKGUARD—Maxwell Bodenheim—*Covici-McGee.* A most unpicaresque rascal and poet fights with his environment and finally achieves a strange sort of freedom.

THE VICTIM AND THE WORM—Phyllis Bottome—*Doran.* Two long short stories, tragico-comico-satirical and exhibiting the two sides of selfishness very deftly.

THE VOICE AT JOHNNYWATER—B. M. Bower—*Little, Brown.* A mixture of westerner and moving picture hero makes a mixture of comedy and adventure.

THE WRONG MOVE—Anna Robeson Burr—*Macmillan.* The Gooch Square murder is a wildly impossible tale cleverly handled.

*ROUGH-HEWN—Dorothy Canfield—*Harcourt, Brace.* A rich and brilliant study of the life and love of two normal young Americans.

ROUND THE CORNER—Gilbert Cannan—*Seltzer.* Photographic but interesting chronicle of an English clergyman and his family life.

*ONE OF OURS—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* A young man, puzzled by life, finds his soul and death in a glorified version of the war.

THE MURDER ON THE LINKS—Agatha Christie—*Dodd, Mead.* Conforms to the de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mand for books of this type, and averages up to the general run.

THE COUNTRY BEYOND — James Oliver Curwood—*Cosmopolitan.* Dog and man worship the loveliest woman of them all out and beyond Lake Superior.

TIMES HAVE CHANGED—Elmer Davis—*McBride.* Stolen diamonds wrapped in a patchwork quilt very nearly break up a happy home.

POSSESSION—Mazo de la Roche—*Macmillan.* Bits of originality strung on a wisely restrained tale of a rural two-color marriage.

*THE ENCHANTED APRIL—"Elizabeth"—*Doubleday, Page.* An escape novel in which the refuge from domesticity is an Italian castle. In the end, even domesticity is endowed with beauty by the southern sun.

FLAMING YOUTH—Warner Fabian—*Boni, Liveright.* The new woman speaks plainly as she sheds the moral code and steps valiantly into ways of love not new but newly uncovered.

THE HOUSE OF THE SECRET—Claude Farrère—*Dutton.* A gruesome mystery tale of ever living men, thoroughly Gallic and grotesque.

FIRES OF FATE—Wilbur Finley Fauley—*Metropolitan Book Service.* No words are misspelled, and the text is punctuated correctly. There is also a very nice picture to illustrate the line, "The raft was fast approaching the falls—the mouth of Hell."

*CAPITOL HILL — Harvey Fergusson — *Knopf.* A frank story of our nation's capitol which fulfils the promise of the author's earlier "Blood of the Conquerors".

BEING RESPECTABLE—Grace H. Flandrau —*Harcourt, Brace.* Another satire of American life, which has for background the mongrel respectability of middle western society.

MAINSPRING—V. H. Friedlaender—*Putnam.* A well written problem novel, with self-realization through sacrifice as a theme.

JESSUP — Newton Fuessle — *Boni, Liveright.* The bar sinister is neither a bar nor particularly sinister to the career of the gifted and self-possessed Miss Jessup.

THE QUARE WOMEN—Lucy Furman—*Atlantic.* Miss Furman knows the Kentucky mountains somewhat better than she writes of them.

*FAINT PERFUME—Zona Gale—*Appleton.* Another novel along "Main Street", into the realistic atmosphere of which Miss Gale has put a romance of sweetness and light.

*THE BURNING SPEAR—John Galsworthy —*Scribner.* This delicious satire on the war spirit establishes Galsworthy firmly among the best living humorists.

NACHA REGULES—Manuel Galvaz—*Dutton.* The life of prostitutes in Buenos Aires shown frankly and fully, teaching restitution through suffering.

LADY INTO FOX—David Garnett—*Knopf.* If you don't think this burlesque, see page 27 where the fox refuses to play cards on Sunday.

CONQUISTADOR—Katharine Fullerton Gerould—*Scribner.* A young Spanish-American, graduate of Harvard, falls heir to an estate in Mexico, and adopts the creed that goes with it so strongly that he presently lops off his one chance of happiness. If you can close your eyes and grant the premises, you may agree with his choice of roads.

THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD—Philip Gibbs —*Doran.* Social and economic differences of opinion very nearly wreck a romance; but peace is made over a brilliant reportorial discussion of present day sadnesses in Europe.

TYLER OF BARNET—Bernard Gilbert—*Small, Maynard.* This is a long leisurely tale of an English parish lovingly studied by one who has lived in that atmosphere many years.

THE STEP ON THE STAIR—Anna Katharine Green—*Dodd, Mead.* A question of several wills and a dead uncle, whose death carries a hint of poison. Nephews do the unraveling.

WANDERER OF THE WASTELAND—Zane Grey—*Harper.* A man creates a soul for himself in the scenes and events of the desert country where he bravely renounces temptations of the flesh.

THE LUCKY NUMBER—Ian Hay—*Houghton Mifflin.* Thirteen excellent short stories, each in a different style.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EMPEROR'S OLD CLOTHES—Frank Heller—*Crowell.* A eunuch from the emperor's palace buys a house in Copenhagen and sends three messages in cipher to his lord and master. Whereupon is based the best mystery story we have read this year.

HOMELY LILLA—Robert Herrick—*Harcourt, Brace.* A brawny woman endures much and works out her final salvation, in spite of a husband, on an Idaho ranch.

DEMIAN—Hermann Hesse—*Boni, Liveright.* A German novel of adolescence and early manhood, much involved with a semi-religious, symbolic mysticism.

MERRY O—Ethel Hueston—*Bobbs-Merrill.* When a parson and his daughters go flivvering, the fun begins.

*THIS FREEDOM—A. S. M. Hutchinson—*Little, Brown.* Home may be the place for a woman; but Mr. Hutchinson isn't very convincing in his story attempt to prove it.

ANTHONY JOHN—Jerome K. Jerome—*Dodd, Mead.* Mr. Jerome's skill as a writer is as unquestionable as is his sincerity, which makes the utterly illogical ending of this book rather inexcusable.

CABLES OF COBWEB—Paul Jordan-Smith—*Lieber, Lewis.* Another book of that fast increasing school dealing with youth's experiments and experiences while on the road that leads to the world.

PERADVENTURE—Robert Keable—*Putnam.* A dramatization of religious doubt. The hero's theological emotions are even, at times, thrilling.

SIMON CALLED PETER—Robert Keable—*Putnam.* The eternal struggle of high ideals and breaking moral standards. Intensified, because the young man happens to be a minister of the gospel.

CAREER—Dorothy Kennard—*Century.* The dry bones of diplomacy have been given *couleur de rose* in this tale of the Golden Horn.

THE CAPTAIN'S DOLL—D. H. Lawrence—*Seltzer.* The author continues digging through the obvious to bring up hidden motives and languishing instincts.

*BABBITT—Sinclair Lewis—*Harcourt, Brace.* Mr. Lewis draws an amazingly good, if slightly cruel, portrait of the American middle class business man and his haunts.

GENEVRA'S MONEY—E. V. Lucas—*Doran.* The story of a bequest to nephews and nieces. Genuinely funny.

MAN'S COUNTRY—Peter Clark Macfarlane—*Cosmopolitan.* A psychoanalyst solves the problem when George's business plays havoc with his wife's affections and behavior.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE—Harold MacGrath—*Doubleday, Page.* About as good a who-killed-the-old-man story as one can get.

STOLEN HONEY—Rachel Swete Macnamara—*Small, Maynard.* About a marriage of convenience that turned out well.

THE SURVIVORS—Lucas Malet—*Dodd, Mead.* With London and North Downs as a setting, some of the social and domestic problems that have arisen in the wake of the Great War are discussed without attempt to solve.

THE CRUISE OF THE JASPER B.—Don Marquis—*Appleton.* Fun, mystery, and romance mixed with militant feminism make a jolly cocktail of whimsicalities.

THE CLINTON TWINS—Archibald Marshall—*Dodd, Mead.* When the irrepressible twins become tiresome, there is the counter irritant of eight other stories to make the book well worth your while.

*FIERY PARTICLES—C. E. Montague—*Doubleday, Page.* Short stories of power, penetration, beauty, and thrills. *(See page 451.)*

*WHERE THE BLUE BEGINS—Christopher Morley—*Doubleday, Page.* A delightful allegory all about how a very human dog finds that real contentment lies where he had least expected.

THE LANDLORD'S DAUGHTER—Harrison S. Morris—*Penn.* All that is sweet and mild has been omitted from this tale of a Quaker village.

THE ORISSERS—L. H. Myers—*Scribner.* A long listless chronicle of a decaying family told with too abundant verbiage.

SELF—Beverley Nichols—*Moffat, Yard.* A cleverly drawn picture of a repellent character who meets a well deserved fate.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WOLFER—Frederick Niven—*Dodd, Mead.* Mining turns out just as exciting an occupation in the west of today as the wolf killing was when this still young man was exterminating those pests.

TRODDEN GOLD—Howard Vincent O'Brien—*Little, Brown.* What makes a happy marriage? The struggles of love with poverty, or the acquiring of wealth? An interesting story, if not a satisfying conclusion.

THE SEVEN CONUNDRUMS—E. Phillips Oppenheim—*Little, Brown.* A new twist in mystery stories, for a vaudeville troupe are the fortuitous detective's aids in the solving.

A DAUGHTER OF THE DAWN—Marion Randall Parsons—*Little, Brown.* As it would be unfair to term this "another South Sea Island story", perhaps intermarriage between the races, with its attendant tragedies, will serve.

IMPROMPTU—Elliot H. Paul—*Knopf.* Written in a curious poetical style, this story of an exceedingly unconventional lady in surroundings not always considered mentionable is not extraordinary, though it has some quality.

LA PARCELLE 32—Ernest Pérochon—*Doran.* The French peasant's love for the soil and what it can lead to. A tragic idyl of more than usual beauty.

AS WE ARE—Collected by Walter B. Pitkin—*Harcourt, Brace.* A collection of short stories that are interesting without being of permanent literary value.

PAY GRAVEL—Hugh Poindexter—*Bobbs-Merrill.* Indian fighters outguess and outfight Sitting Bull at his best.

STELLA DALLAS—Olive Higgins Prouty—*Houghton Mifflin.* A worth while, vivid story with three heroines, the least promising of them rising to greatness in the end.

YOUTH'S WAY—Cale Young Rice—*Century.* A poet's first novel, somewhat too much like Sherwood Anderson, Floyd Dell & Co. to be all it might be.

*THE BREAKING POINT—Mary Roberts Rinehart—*Doran.* A mystery romance of something akin to dual personality. Filled with thrills and psychological understanding.

SCISSORS—Cecil Roberts—*Stokes.* After a childhood in Asia Minor, an English youth is educated in school and life back home—but the war calls him to die in Mesopotamia.

CAPTAIN BLOOD—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* An attractive swashbuckling Irishman plays havoc around and about the Spanish Main.

THE SEA-HAWK—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* A historian turned novelist writes a fine story of adventure among the Barbary Corsairs.

THE SNARE—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* Another Sabatini hero, with a background of the Napoleonic Wars.

THE BIRD OF PASSAGE—John Schoolcraft—*Doran.* Peregrinations of a tramp called Springtime, with some racy hobo atmosphere and considerable amusement in the unsentimental moments.

STORIES, DREAMS AND ALLEGORIES—Olive Schreiner—*Stokes.* A fortunate reclamation from magazine evanescence. Infrequently found beauty and simplicity mark the stories.

*ANNE SEVERN AND THE FIELDINGS—May Sinclair—*Macmillan.* Various possible and probable love affairs reveal the facets of Anne's character. A psychoanalytical rather than psychological novel.

DOWNSTREAM—Sigfrid Siwertz—*Knopf.* This book is an agreeable exception to those that seem to lose in strength or artistic merit through translation.

*THE FASCINATING STRANGER—Booth Tarkington—*Doubleday, Page.* Genial tales of adolescence and young love, with some burlesque and satire mingled. Good spring stuff. *(See page 451.)*

THE RIVER ROAD—Hamilton Thompson—*Watt.* A fairly good plot wrapped up in a great deal of "old New England" hokum.

THE ROAD TO CALVARY—Alexey Tolstoy—*Boni, Liveright.* Russian bourgeois society of the last twenty years is finely interpreted in this narrative. Tolstoy uncovers a new quality among the realists—a sense of humor.

STONECROP—Cécile Tormay—*McBride.* This story of Hungarian peasant life has a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

simplicity and distinction which fulfils much of the promise of "The Old House".

HIS CHILDREN'S CHILDREN—Arthur Train—*Scribner.* Three generations of a New York family indulge in social gambolings and dissipations about which one may read with impunity because they apparently shock the author's moral sensibilities.

THE UNBIDDEN GUEST—Silvio Villa—*Macmillan.* A collection of exquisite gems by one whose love for his native Italy amounts to consuming passion.

*THE CATHEDRAL—Hugh Walpole—*Doran.* The story of how a great cathedral raised a man to power and saw him crushed by his own stubbornness and pride — a tapestry of characterizations.

FOOTLIGHTS—Rita Weiman—*Dodd, Mead.* The spotlight penetrates the scenery and shows us what goes on back stage in a series of delightful short stories.

THE AFFAIR AT FLOWER ACRES—Carolyn Wells—*Doran.* A man was murdered from all four directions at once. Who did it?

ISLAND GOLD — Valentine Williams — *Houghton Mifflin.* A search for buried treasure with the best villain in the South Seas.

FAMILY — Wayland Wells Williams — *Stokes.* There is no puppetry about the distinct figures placed in this interesting story of the demands of family tradition.

PILGRIM'S REST—Francis Brett Young—*Dutton.* A long book crowded with unessentials which tend to bury a story of South African adventure.

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Jean Starr Untermeyer

THERE is so much of awe and beauty implicit in the great major themes — life, death, love, grief — that centuries of usage and the most minor of minor poets cannot quite annihilate their magic.

On the other hand, it takes mastery both technical and, for want of a more definitive phrase, let us say spiritual, to be able to take the trivial, the commonplace, the evanescent moment and invest it with poignance and significance. In the following poem Robert Frost performs just this feat of genius. His theme is of the slightest texture — it is hardly a theme at all — just a picture of a man, halting on his homeward ride at twilight to look at darkening woods. And yet with no effort of description, the whole color and feel of dusk is here, and the knell of loneliness that comes and goes only to return again.

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

The little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Robert Frost
—*The New Republic*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Side by side with this lovely nocturne is a characteristic fantasy by William Rose Benét. It is called "Moon Rider" and those who read can run to the March 7 issue of "The New Republic". The poem is too long to quote here but it is well worth consideration in spite of its shadowy suggestions of Walter de la Mare. The selections in "The New Republic" show the fine critical hand of its poetry editor. For here is another poem, a beautiful blend of whimsicality and irony that cannot escape quotation.

ADVERTISEMENT

We want a man of forty for the job.
One who has enjoyed his little fill of romance.
And suffered intermittent indigestion ever since.
One whose memories are sufficiently cold
successfully to resist the embraces of truancy.
To whom a mountain
no longer looms an ideal
to scramble up and tumble down,
but is an actual thing made of stone
bristling with multitudinous edges
to bark one's shins or break one's neck upon.
To whom a lake or river
or other body of water
no longer entices the search for one's likeness
(we only ask a man to be himself
and not go diving after phantoms),
but is a place one might readily drown in,
one's muscles no longer quite what they were.
Who has achieved
that ultimate disillusionment:
not to be able to differentiate
the respective features, limbs or what not
of his whilom Graces and Gwendolyns,
and if he could wouldn't want to,
would devote the rest of his days to a desk
piled sky-high with ledgers and cash-books:
Such a man would be certain to stick,
we want such a man for the job.

Alfred Kreymborg
—*The New Republic*

"Poetry" offers a very interesting group by Marion Strobel of which three tempt to quotation. But since considerations of space force me to the rigor of choice between "The Gestures You Make", "Pitiful in Your Bravery", and "Pastoral", I take the second, although the pale music of the last one almost wins me by its delicate descending chromatics.

PITIFUL IN YOUR BRAVERY

Pitiful in your bravery, you stand
Shielding him. Oh, but you are young!
You give
Yourself as heather to a waste of land,
And turn the barren soil in which you live
To beauty. . . . You, who valiantly blow
Your youth across his shrivelled years, and come
With your fierce pride, and at the last will go
With head unbowed, eyes dark with scorn, like some
Diana who has run and lost the race
Yet found the running sweet — O you, as slim
And tireless as Time, with your child's face
And timid hands, why have you chosen him
To shield? — to love? Why must you be so dull
And steadfast in your youth? . . . and beautiful!

Marion Strobel
—*Poetry*

In "Renunciation", Joseph Freeman chronicles the unhappy compromise of youth (sometimes of age) with bitter self-understanding, an understanding that does not mitigate the weakness nor dull the barb of self-scorn.

RENUNCIATION

Though you are lovely as the light of day
And perfumed as a courtesan of kings,
You are not worth a fragment of the things
That for your beauty I have given away.
What shall I find in you to take the place
Of books and friends and quiet wondering,
And battle and sweat and the world's thundering? —
Only the fading glory of your face.
I have lost the bread of life for one brief rose,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And living waters for a drop of wine:
Far-off I hear the gates of darkness close
On promised lands that never shall be mine.
Thus morning after morning I cry in pain,
And night after night I come to you again.

Joseph Freeman
—*Poetry*

Lola Ridge's fine descriptive pen gives us a group called "Back Yards", all of them charged with her angular social passion and arresting the mind and eye by the sharply outlined image, the unusual, apt simile. I quote the last of the group, omitting, for want of space, the rather obscure first verse. Here is a decapitated

MARIE

When Marie carries down the stair
The ritual of her face,
Your greeting takes her unaware,
And her glance is timid-bold
As a dog's unsure of its place.
With that hair, of the rubbed-off gold
Of a wedding-ring worn to a thread,
In a halo about the head,
And those luminous eyes in their rims of paint,
She looks a bedizened saint.

But when the worn moon, like a face still beautiful,
Wavers above the Battery,
And light comes in, mauve-gray,
Squeezing through shutters of furnished *rooms*
Till only corners hold spots of darkness —
As a table-cloth its purple stains
When a festival is ended —
Then Marie creeps into the house.

The paint is lonesome on her cheek.
The paint is gone from off her mouth
That curls back loosely from her teeth.
She pushes slackly at the dawn
That crawls upon the yellow blind,
And enters like an aimless moth
Whose dim wings hover and alight
Upon the blurred face of the clock,
Or on the pallor of her feet —
Or anything that's white.
Until dispersed upon the sheet,
All limp, her waxen body lies
In its delinquent grace,
Like a warm bent candle
That flears about its place.

Lola Ridge
—*Poetry*

I would like to quote from "The Century" George Santayana's "A Minuet on Reaching the Age of Fifty", a love song in lavender addressed, possibly, to his crinolined muse; or, from "The Measure", Elizabeth J. Coatsworth's slight "Charms for Six" with their intermittent gift for epithet; or from "The Occident" (published at the University of California), a group called "From a College Campus" by Paul Tanaquil, of which this small excerpt will give the flavor of his epigrammatic crispness:

LITTLE THOUGHT ON GRADUATING

Since all their processes they keep
Uniform as so many sheep,
In time they earn for benefit
A sheepskin to betoken it.

Paul Tanaquil
—*The Occident*

Or from "The New Republic", Hazel Hall's "Words for Weeping", with its questioning lyricism. But ever at one's back one hears the click of editorial shears. . . . So I submit this neat and poignant arrangement in paradox:

APOCRYPHA

When John the Baptist was so young
That he had not yet learned to speak
A syllable of his native tongue,
The voice must have been shrill and weak
Wherewith his mother's heart was wrung.

When Jesus' fists uncurled to clutch
The shavings in his father's beard,
Before he learned to like to touch
The screws and nails his mother feared,
Small wandering hands had hurt her much.

When Judas was so frail a child
He sucked and slept, and little more, —
His mother, patient still, beguiled
The baby she must needs adore.
He shaped a kiss: all day she smiled.

Babette Deutsch
—*The New Republic*

— and bow myself out of the editorial offices.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Transcendent Villainy

GIACOMO CASANOVA must have been an entertaining man to meet if you encountered him when you had your wits about you. He would have made an excellent editor for a modern magazine dealing largely with pleasures and personalities. What entertaining parties he would have given! This Italian rogue was one of the first masters of the parlor trick, and he knew all sorts of little games to entertain the ladies. Yes, indubitably Casanova would have been a success in literary New York. Perhaps it would have surprised him to discover himself so much at home in the twentieth century. "Casanova, Adventurer and Lover" by Joseph Le Gras, translated by A. Francis Steuart (Dodd, Mead), is a book filled with rapidfire anecdote and colorful description. Surely, if you are not easily shocked, you will enjoy this romance of peccadillos and bravados, of Venetian confidence games and knavish love making. Sidney Howard has made a play around this gay gentleman for the arch stage villain Lowell Sherman to act next year. It should prove entrancing. This is action for you. The young Casanova moves.

> He was now alone, without a home, unprotected and without cash. Under this stress his real self leaped out. It was necessary to live and to find some money. Unhesitatingly he sold for his own profit all that he could of his father's furniture, regardless of his brothers and sisters. The Abbé Grimani, the zealous guardian of the children during the constant absence of their mother, was troubled. The lawyer, Razetta, intervened. Casanova rode the high horse. They shut him up in a seminary, he made them expel him; they shut him up in the Fort of S. Andrea, he escaped one night for some hours, thrashed Razetta, broke his nose and three teeth, and having thrown him into the canal, fled back to sleep in his prison-fort and arranged an admirable alibi. All the mockers were on his side, and he was soon released from his captivity. That is the true Casanova, and in his best vein. Ingenious in adversity, elusive when doing wrong, tenacious in hatred, a furious, violent, indomitable and an incommensurable liar.

The world loves a lover; and I have a suspicion that it also loves a villain (*if* he's attractive). This new biography certainly makes Giacomo that.

A Circumscribed Triangle

IT would be a rare pleasure to sit down with E. A. Robinson for an hour's discussion of "Roman Bartholow" (Macmillan), his latest dramatic poem. Such a talk would, doubtless, save a great deal of pother; for in this story of three souls torn by love Mr. Robinson is exceedingly faithful to the gods of obscurity. This narrative contains some of the loveliest lines Robinson has written. It also contains more of his curious inverted structures, more of his verbal tentatives ("or may be so", "or so I fear", "or at the least", "or I've a notion so"). These, I fancy, are the best lines of that character to serve as samples:

> . . . for so it seems to me,
> And so to me it is — or so it was.
> Was, is, or may be always — let it fade.

This is not a parody. Vide page 137. "If" with Mr. Robinson is the focal

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

point, both of intellectualization and of the process of drama. He is the great poet of the subjunctive mood.

There are four characters in the poem: Roman Bartholow himself, Penn-Raven, who has wakened Bartholow from lethargy and shown him the way to his soul; Umfraville, a sort of Greek chorus to the progress of events; and Gabrielle, Roman's wife, who might have loved him, who hasn't the ability to seize life boldly, so finally takes her own life. These four move curiously through a sort of allegorical House of Love. For me, it is a veritable House of Mirrors, a Crystal Maze in which I can only grasp vainly at the slightest reflected, distorted, inverted image of Robinson's actual thought. Perhaps it is the poet's contribution to psychoanalysis. At any rate, you will find it fascinating in all its pristine murkiness. It moves me so much, and it means so little to me, that I suspect it of being great. Shall I read it again? Or perhaps, in E. A.'s own words (page 84):

> . . . There would be no more next time
> For it to fall upon than there was now.
> The fire that smote so deep had smitten less
> Than he supposed, for there was less to smite;
> And the waves coming after were no more
> Than waves at midnight on an empty ocean.

Short Stories for Springtime

IT is a pity, in a way, that "The Fascinating Stranger, and Other Stories" (Doubleday, Page) isn't more nearly a unit than it is. So many of the characters — and what distinctive characters they are — run through most of the stories, that it might easily have become a loosely constructed picture of a town, or a boy, or Lucius Brutus Allen in the prime of life. Again we come to the realization that Mr. Tarkington is one of the few Americans who have the ability to, or care to, draw character portraits that are *individuals*. He does not bother so much about the color of their souls as he does with the kind of trousers they wear. This is good! Souls, after all, in the final instance are much alike — trousers aren't. Passion is common to all men. Suspenders aren't. Let us rejoice that Daisy Mears, one of Tarkington's best little girls, I think, has "small bright eyes" and is filled with mischief instead of complexes. Dialogue in these stories sparkles and twitters. There are whole pages of young love making that could be pasted into an act of a Tarkington comedy, probably will be.

"Fiery Particles" by C. E. Montague (Doubleday, Page) are tales of quite another type. Humorous, to be sure; but with a penetrating mordant wit that makes "Honours Easy" — on the face of it a genial, slow moving, rather elaborately worded sketch — more devastating in its arraignment of war conduct than Dos Passos's "Three Soldiers". These are the outlying moments of the war, the silver buttons by which we trace the owner of the coat. Not all of them war, but all of them character sketches. I should like to recommend this book as heartily as "The Fascinating Stranger". I do. It is a beautifully written series of sketches. Not so many people will enjoy them as will laugh at Renfrew and with Lucius Brutus; but I suspect C. E. Montague of being a writer of a vast amount of deftness and possibly a touch of genius.

—*J. F.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

"THE FARINGTON DIARY"

By Robert Cortes Holliday

Mr. Holliday's review is the sixth of a series of longer book reviews to be published each month in THE BOOKMAN. *The books discussed will not necessarily be new nor will they be books which have never before been reviewed in the magazine. The aim of the editors is to present, in the selection of volumes and reviewers, articles which shall constitute solid pieces of criticism.*

THE King Tut-Ankh-Amen adventure of the English literary world, in a manner of speaking, has been the discovery recently of "The Farington Diary". This voluminous and intimate personal record of the brilliant era in England which it covers, 1793-1821, has been compared to works no less than the illustrious chronicles of Evelyn and Pepys. The story of its discovery is a romantic incident in literary history.

A year and a half or so ago a firm of auctioneers which occupies Sir Joshua Reynolds's old house in Leicester Square, and which in its own field ranks with the famous firms of Sotheby's and Christie's, was called upon to adjudge the property of a Surrey spinster named Tyrwhitt. Among other things were found a number of drawings by Farington, the handsome service of silver presented to him by the Royal Academy, and manuscript volumes and notebooks stored away in a mahogany case in a lumber attic. A member of the staff of the London "Morning Post" chanced early to see the literary items, and at his suggestion the sale was postponed for several weeks so that a more careful study of the contents might be made. In due course, in the presence of representatives of the Royal Academy and the chief galleries and divers public bodies, the collection of documents was knocked down to the "Morning Post" at 110 guineas. The first intention of that newspaper was to publish selections from the Diary for a period of six weeks. The public interest excited by its serial publication is evidenced by the notes with which the present volume is liberally punctuated, contributed by readers of the paper. The series has been continuing at the rate of a column or so a day for about a year, and still goes steadily ahead. In this country a taste of the Diary has been given by instalments published in the "Atlantic". The initial volume, issued under the editorship of James Greig, art critic of the "Morning Post", has been reviewed by such eminent hands as Augustine Birrell and Hilaire Belloc. Mr. Belloc is not backward in saying that the publication of this material renders "a very great service to English history". Maurice Francis Egan, another reviewer of the portly volume before us, judges it as "a volume of interest and pleasure to those amateurs of history who like gossip, new information and shrewd comments on persons whom they have already learned to look on as acquaintances and companions, if not friends". So much

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

concerning the forthcoming of the book.

As Mr. Birrell observes, Joseph Farington, R. A. evidently was, like the late John Forster, the biographer of Dickens, an "arbitrary gent", and for many years "ruled the roost" in the Royal Academy. He was the director of that institution during the Regency period, a lofty dictator of his distinguished world in the days when, as we realize with increased vividness in perusing these pages, success in art was very much a matter of politics. It is rather comical to read today of the august sway of this pompous officialdom. Much was made at that time of "gentility" in painting. The diarist records the surprise felt in his circle by the increased price ("30 guineas a head") put on his work by a painter whose portraits seemed "only fit for sea captains and merchants". One entry in the Diary notes of a certain painter "up" for election to the Academy the qualification urged in his behalf that he was so much of a gentleman. Farington was famed in his world as "a true gentleman". A correspondent of the time speaks of his "Majesty of appearance" and "haughtiness of Behaviour". That he was a nobly handsome man the frontispiece to this volume, after a painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence, attests. There is no doubt that he was a great power in the world of wealth and fashion, his favor sought by lords and eminent commoners.

The century which has passed since Farington flourished has almost obliterated him as an artist, though during his lifetime his water colors were held generally in high esteem. He stands on record in the "Dictionary of National Biography" simply as an Academician who achieved "two collections of views of English lakes" which were engraved by other hands for publication. He made a set of drawings of the pictures at the seat of the Earl of Orford which was sold to the Empress Catherine of Russia at a cost of £40,555, the value put on the collection by Benjamin West and Cipriani, to the astonishment of Horace Walpole — and, I should say, to ours. The reproductions of his work in the present volume are in effect "pretty" and "tight". His most ardent champion, Mr. Greig, observes that he "was not a brilliant artist" but assigns to his work the value of topographical records. For a figure of such dignity he met, at seventy-four, a curious death. Encumbered with hat, umbrella, prayer book, and galoshes, he slipped on a flight of stairs one morning at the conclusion of church service and fell on his head. "Such was the Will of God," wrote his niece following the last entry, made that morning, in his Diary.

In a note to his executors found among his papers Farington directed that his Diary be entrusted to his brother, Richard Atherton Farington, to be published at his discretion. He had kept the Diary, he said, for his own amusement, to refresh his memory and to clarify his judgment. Turning now to the work itself, one finds that nearly every interesting personality of the late seventeenth-eighteenth century comes into view. Johnson, Reynolds, Burke, Goldsmith, Boswell, Horace Walpole, King George, the Thrales, Garrick, Mrs. Siddons, Nelson, Howe, Hood and other naval commanders, Mirabeau, Marat, Napoleon, the Duke of Orleans, the Duke of Orange, Gainsborough, Hoppner, Turner, Constable, Pitt, Warren Hastings, Lady Hamilton, and the Piozzis — some of the names, these, which light the pages.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Diary may conveniently be divided in the mind into two parts: one which deals with the affairs of the newly founded Royal Academy of the Arts and with the painters, engravers, and architects of the day; the other, with the more general public of authors, critics, actors, soldiers, etc. There are numerous entries relating to Americans — Benjamin West, Copley, his son (the future Lord Lyndhurst), and Robert Fulton — and a number of references to the United States both before and after the War of Independence. From a friend who in 1796 had been in America "for abt. 5 weeks" the diarist learned that in rainy seasons "it requires 5 or 6 days to go from New York to Philadelphia — you travel in a sort of carriage waggon drawn by 4 horses". Living was "extremely expensive". Ranks in society were "strongly marked". George Washington was respected even by those who opposed his "politicks". "To the English who are properly introduced to him by our Resident He is attentive; but takes no notice of adventurers." The diarist spells the name of one of the States "Pencilvania". One of the longest entries in the Diary, singularly enough, relates to a curiosity from South Carolina — a "Rattle Snake I went to see in Bond St."

In the matter relating to the English political atmosphere perhaps the outstanding impression conveyed by the volume is the openness of expression among the English privileged classes during the wars against the French Revolution. Here and there are little reports which add a touch or two, and sometimes more, of light or shading to the familiar portraits that have long rested unaltered in the picture gallery of our minds. Just when the great Nelson was in chains to what seemed to him immortal beauty, there is a note upon a party. It ends: "Lady Hamilton, in the evening between eleven and twelve, displayed her attitudes — she is bold and unguarded in her manner, is grown fat and drinks freely." There are bits of touching quality. One (which reads rather like a scene out of "Tristram Shandy") relates the death of Burke's son Richard, who, upon being told by his father that the sound he heard was the wind among the trees, began with his expiring breath to repeat that part of the morning hymn from "Paradise Lost", beginning with: "His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow. . . ." There are any number of purely entertaining anecdotes. For example, Sir Joseph Banks, botanist and munificent patron of science, who one day called on the diarist, had his feet inclosed in large stiff shoes, yet stood the whole time of his stay, as he said, to avoid too much indulgence. Again, Dunning, the famous lawyer, who looked like the ace of clubs, once asked an old Mr. Nichols, professor of anatomy, whether in case of illness he should apply to a young physician or an old one. "The difference", replied Mr. Nichols, "is this — the former will kill you; the other will let you die." There is an immense amount of art "shop", much of it very quaint today. Now and then there are vivid portraits, such as this one:

> Mr. Burns, the Scottish Poet. At present an Exciseman in Dumfries, on £70 a year. He is married, and has a family. He is a middle-sized man, black-complexioned, and his general appearance that of a tradesman or mechanic. He has a strong expressive manner of delivering himself in conversation. He is not acquainted with the Latin language. His father was a gardener in Ayrshire.

On certain relationships the diarist is quite frank, not to say blunt:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Heath [the engraver] lives with a woman, & has several children. . . . His wife a pretty woman, is living." He is fond of recording the various diseases suffered by his acquaintances. He seldom mentions a meal that he does not chronicle all the dishes served. He reports the precise hour at which his friends arise, when they breakfast and dine, and when they go to bed. But above all and beyond everything, he is obsessed by the idea of money. He tells what everything cost, how much everybody is worth, how much this one lost, how much that one left, what another may expect by way of inheritance, how much someone borrowed from someone else, and so on and so on.

Some of the reviewers of this volume have remarked of Farington that very little of interest escaped him. That statement is far, indeed, from the fact. A great deal of life escaped him. He saw only the surface. He was totally devoid of humor. He was, this decorous and perfectly self-possessed gentleman, also quite without another very potent quality in a diarist — namely, malice. He did not penetrate to ideas at all. There is hardly a drop of reflection in the whole of these 348 pages. There is no hint of a philosophy of life. There is no warmth of personality. A not inconsiderable portion of the Diary consists of decidedly empty information — empty to anyone except, perhaps, English genealogists. But Farington did have a vast amount of curiosity, a very observant eye for detail, and an almost unparalleled acquaintance. And he carried on his remarkable work as private intimate reporter for posterity for over thirty years. It should be said in conclusion that to give a just value of the varied contents of this volume is, perhaps, a thing beyond the reach of a review of moderate length.

The Farington Diary. By Joseph Farington, R.A. Edited by James Greig. Volume I (July 13, 1793, to August 24, 1802). George H. Doran Company.

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

THE FATE OF THE FUNNY MEN

By Robert C. Benchley

"WHAT story shall it be tonight?" asked Uncle George, as the kiddikins clustered about his chair for their midnight yarn preparatory to being put, pie-eyed, to bed.

And as in one voice they all cried: "Tell us what happened to the three humorists who were found dead in the woods!"

"Very well, then. The tragedy of the Three Funny Men it shall be," said Uncle George, putting out his pipe and drawing his chair away from the fire.

"Once upon a time there were three young men who were very, very funny. Occasionally they wrote little articles for the papers which were so amusing that soon they became known as 'contenders for the mantle of Mark Twain'. Then one night they went out into the woods and something terrible happened.

"The first young funny man was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seized by a newspaper editor who said: 'If this man can be as funny as this once a month he ought to be just thirty-one times as funny thirty-one times a month.' So he put him to work on a daily space assignment and said to him, 'Be funny every day, using what you find in the news as material, and, incidentally, make it general enough in its appeal so that we can syndicate it throughout the country.'

"The second humorist was seized by a magazine editor who had ideas of his own. 'Do me an article every week, or every month', he said to the funny man, 'on "How to Plant a Garden", "Mother-in-Law Troubles", "New Year's Resolutions", "Christmas Shopping", and "How It Feels to be Married". When you get those done, I will give you some more new ideas.'

"The third humorist went along by himself for quite a while, being just as funny as he knew how a great deal oftener than he knew how, because his children had a way of eating up all the food there was in the house and asking for more. Finally he, too, was seized, but unlike his companions he was not seized by a man but by the Spirit of Service. 'I have been just a funny man long enough,' he said to himself. 'And besides I'm not so funny as I used to be anyway. It is high time that I did some good in the world. I will use my gift for humorous expression to further some good cause, such as Patriotism, Chastity, Honesty, or the completion of the Bronx River Parkway. I will show them that I have my serious side as well.'

"And one morning all three humorists were found dead in the woods by an old charcoal burner who had never laughed in his life before."

This pitiful little story is intended merely to indicate a danger which may result in the general extinction of American humor through quantity production, and does not apply literally to the humorous books under discussion here tonight. They do, however, fall loosely under the three headings sufficiently to justify our having gone to all the trouble of making up the fable.

H. I. Phillips might well play the part of the young funny man who was seized by the newspaper. Possessed of an undeniable gift for humorous expression, he could ring a bell at almost every shot if he wrote only when he had something funny to write about. But under his contract with the "Globe" he must fill a corner every day, going to the news ticker for his inspiration, and, if it contains no inspiration, filling his corner anyway. Consequently, his book, "The Globe Trotter", which is a collection of his contributions to his column, is a mixture of very funny stuff and tragically unfunny stuff, tragic because Mr. Phillips must have wished when he wrote it that his column was in hell. Someone would be rendering a service to American humor, although perhaps not to the New York "Globe", by endowing Mr. Phillips so that he wouldn't have to be funny every day.

Shifting the order of catastrophes, we may take Gelett Burgess and Ellis Parker Butler, in their respective books "Have You an Educated Heart?" and "Ghosts What Ain't", as examples of humorists who have been seized by the Spirit of Service. There can certainly be no fault found if Mr. Burgess wants to promote intelligent kindness throughout the land in a modern rendering of "The Vision of Sir Launfal", or with Mr. Butler if he wants to warn the world against Blind Fear.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They do it very well. But somehow, after reading them, we think wistfully back on "The Purple Cow" and "Pigs Is Pigs", and wish that these really humorous gentlemen had left the inspirational work of the world to Dr. Crane.

In pointing to Ring Lardner's "Say It With Oil" (reprinted from "The American Magazine" in a Siamese volume with Nina Wilcox Putnam's "Say It With Bricks") we do not even remotely imply that Mr. Lardner will ever be found dead in the woods as a humorist because of having been seized by a magazine editor. Even magazine editors can't kill Mr. Lardner. His reply to Mrs. Putnam's synthetic attack on husbands has more laughs in it than you will find in the collected works of any other humorist. But it does in the main show that the idea was Editor Siddall's. It does show that Mr. Lardner didn't care an awful lot about doing it, and that he was glad when it was done and in the mail. It is a typical magazine editor's idea, and the fact that Mr. Lardner got some laughs into it doesn't make it any better. There are plenty of things that Ring Lardner ought to be doing, without spending his time trying to rewrite something that editors have been suggesting to funny men for hundreds of years.

Incidentally, this review must end here as the writer is already late with an article for an editor who suggested about 2,000 words on "How to Plant a Garden".

The Globe Trotter. By H. I. Phillips. Doubleday, Page and Co.
Have You an Educated Heart? By Gelett Burgess. Boni and Liveright.
Ghosts What Ain't. By Ellis Parker Butler. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Say It With Oil and Say It With Bricks. By Ring W. Lardner and Nina Wilcox Putnam. George H. Doran Company.

THE DIARY OF JOHN D. LONG

By James L. Ford

"AMERICA of Yesterday", compiled from the diary of the late John Davis Long by Lawrence S. Mayo, is well named, for it portrays a career of the sort common enough in New England in days gone by and shows the rise of a farmer's boy from his native village in Maine to the governorship of Massachusetts and a post in McKinley's Cabinet.

It cannot be said that the volume sheds any new or especially interesting light on the period of our national history in which Mr. Long played at times a not unimportant part. It is interesting, however, in its record of upward growth through the various stages then considered the inevitable stepping stones toward distinguished ends. Young Long received his early training in the village academy and at the age of fifteen was ready to enter Harvard College. There he seems to have devoted his time to the pursuit of learning, and although he speaks of an upper classman who was suspended for getting drunk and doing considerable damage to a freshman's room, the picture he draws of college life takes on a distinctly academic color.

At the age of eighteen he became a schoolmaster, as did almost every New England boy of that period destined to later renown. In the town of Westford, Massachusetts, twenty miles northwest of Boston, he became the head master of the local school and secured lodging and board for $3.25 a week, including washing. Besides instructing a large number of boys and girls he organized the Westford Literary Association, which met on alternate Monday evenings for decla-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mation and debate and was designed to take the place of the rather boisterous meetings of the village sewing circle.

After two years of teaching he entered the law office of Sidney Bartlett in Boston and here he "read law in the good old-fashioned way", to quote his biographer's words. Admitted to the bar in 1861, Long returned to his native village of Buckfield, Maine and hung out his shingle on the ell of the family homestead. His practice here did not prove lucrative and he returned to Boston, where he entered the law office of Chandler and Shattuck. It will surprise many of Mr. Long's friends to learn that in 1863 he sold a play to Maggie Mitchell which was produced at the Boston Theatre.

To my mind the later years of Mr. Long's life as depicted in his diary are singularly lacking in interest when we consider that he filled the position of Secretary of the Navy during our war with Spain and was at all times in close association with the many distinguished men and women then in Washington. What he has to say about President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and the various notabilities concerned in the war is distinctly commonplace.

Diligent perusal of the different works of biography and autobiography that have appeared in this country during the past two or three decades has convinced me that the interest in those volumes depends not on the importance of the writer or of the events chronicled but on the ability to write vividly and to see the picturesque side of things. The ex-Kaiser's book should be nailed to the barn door of every man who purposes the setting down of his recollections as a solemn warning of the results of intense egotism. No man of our time had enjoyed greater facilities for watching history in the making and meeting the most celebrated men and women in Europe than had Wilhelm II, yet few men have written a duller book. Mr. Long shows no egotism, but he evidently failed to observe the things best worth writing about.

America of Yesterday, As Reflected in the Journal of John Davis Long. Edited by Lawrence Shaw Mayo. The Atlantic Monthly Press.

PAPINI CONFESSES CHRIST

By Alice Rohe

THE appearance of a life of Christ as a literary aftermath of the war is not an extraordinary phenomenon. Nor is the fact that this violent protestation of faith comes from Giovanni Papini the seven days' wonder so many would make of it. For in considering the book we have to consider first the man. Few instances of personality projection have been more marked, outside the field of autobiography, than this first important life of Christ to appear since Renan's "The Life of Jesus".

The real power of the book lies in the impression of actual participation in the events. Not only does Papini succeed in suggesting that one is reading the narration of an eye witness. His work becomes the emotional visualization of a devoted and intransigent disciple, embittered by a world which has rejected Christ and which refuses to see the faith as he himself sees it. It is an interesting study in conversion; but, as is often the case with converts, there is much intolerance of those not similarly converted.

An understanding of the book pre-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

supposes a knowledge of Papini's early enmity toward Christianity, his unrestrained denial of orthodox religion which brought him even the term "anti-Christ". Considering the abandon with which this Italian genius threw himself into his earlier literary expressions, it is not strange that a vagrant suspicion arises now as to the stability of his present vehement protestation of faith. Papini, remember, is only forty-two.

For those who know little of the disillusions of this tormented soul groping for truth and freedom, the despair over wasted sacrifices which drenched him at the end of the war, his turning toward a faith he once denied loses part of its significance. Papini found peace and truth in Christ, and he is impatient that all others do likewise.

The book of 408 pages is based entirely upon the Gospels. He explains that his is no scientific work, advancing new discoveries. Yet the impassioned style of narration is that of a discoverer eager to reveal his findings for guidance of others. The work is written in scenes rather than in chapters, and not once does the aggressive vigor of the style waver. It is picturesque to the point where colorful word paintings visualize events with heart stirring reality.

In no part of the book does Papini surpass the opening descriptions of the Nativity:

> Jesus was born in a stable, a real stable, not the bright, airy portico which Christian painters have created for the Son of David, as if ashamed that their God should have lain down in poverty and dirt. . . . The filthiest place in the world was the first room of the only PURE MAN ever born of woman.

The parable of the prodigal son is one of the finest bits in the book, giving, against a glowing background of description, the surging thoughts of Papini on fatherhood, on duty, and on life.

Again: "Jesus, like all great souls, loved the country." And throughout the book flashes of simplicity give to the Florentine's effort at relating Christ's teachings to human needs, a unique place in literature. This "Life" is really an expansion of the Gospels, editorialized, philosophized by one of the vital literary forces in Italy today.

Papini is blessed in having his beloved work given to America by Dorothy Canfield Fisher. The rare fortune of being translated by a distinguished writer of finest literary intuitions, who has a perfect knowledge of romance languages, does not often befall a foreign author.

Life of Christ. By Giovanni Papini. Freely translated by Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

POEMS OLD AND NEW

By David Morton

IT has already become a commonplace to say that Alice Meynell's poetry has made a permanent niche for itself. Those who care for sheer beauty and delicacy of feeling, transpiring in a thin but authentic music, can always turn with confidence to this singer, whose voice was stilled in death a few months ago. The complete edition of the "Poems" contains all of Mrs. Meynell's poetry, from "Preludes" and the "Poems" issued in 1893 to "Last Poems", issued in 1923. Yet the volume does not bulk large. It runs to less than 150 pages, in three sections: "Early Poems", "Later Poems", "Last Poems".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Such an arrangement invites a study of the progress of this poet's art. And what such a study ends with is a turning back to "Earlier Poems" as the richer in feeling, the more moving and convincing, and the more musically wrought. One is tempted to prophesy that time's selective process will yield a larger representation from this group than from the two groups embracing the author's later work. This, despite the fact that such favorites as "The Shepherdess" and "Chimes" — pure music! — and "The Poet to the Birds" are to be found in the subsequent divisions. But these are rather a return to the earlier spirit and manner, and may be considered as belonging, in character, to that part of Mrs. Meynell's production grouped under the title "Early Poems". In these is the fine flowing of a poetic mind indigenous to the tradition of English poetry, and characteristic of it both in method and spirit. The individual note is a rare and beautiful sadness and sweetness of spirit. Through the delicately articulated syllables runs an exquisite music that is thin, but never doubtful or faint.

In the "Later Poems" and "Last Poems" there are increased firmness of touch, a clearer perception, a finer intellectuality — and less feeling and less delicately attenuated music. There is, therefore, less appeal to the purely poetic. One goes back and reads again and again the earlier poems. One admires the accomplishment of the later, and passes on.

It is impossible to speak of Alice Meynell without a mention of religious poetry. After Lionel Johnson and Francis Thompson, she is England's Catholic poet. Yet her religious poems, excellent as they are in workmanship, do not move the reader so generously nor so profoundly as the free and changing moods of her love poems and nature poems. Time will be long forgetting these latter, if indeed it forgets them ever. They come with a rich contribution for the spirit of man, in their fine poetic perception of the changing phenomenon of life, and they give that contribution in language that approaches pure melody.

It is both too early and too late to offer valuable estimates of the poetry of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt — that untamable Victorian liberal who, until his death last year, was a thorn in the flesh of British imperialism, and an indefatigable worker in poetry. His earlier contemporaries recognized his powers and listed him as an accomplished revolutionary against the prettiness and sweetness of much of the poetry of that era. In contrast, he was a "plain, blunt man". His later contemporaries were apt to lose this flavor of revolt in him — for they had out-Heroded; but it is impossible to miss here and there in his poetry a fine, ringing piece of work of proportions and power. How posterity will rank him, this is not the place to conjecture; but the new edition of his "Poems" will afford an opportunity for just estimate. The volume includes all that the author wished to include — from his first important piece of work, "Esther: A Young Man's Tragedy", to a collection of lyrics written in his later years. In one department of literature, the sonnet, Blunt has made himself secure. Few sequences contain finer sonnets of young and passionate love adventure than "Esther". And in "Love Sonnets of Proteus" the same theme, with somewhat more maturity, is treated effectively, though on the whole the work is less moving.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A book by G. K. C. is sure to be interesting — and "The Ballad of St. Barbara" qualifies. In any serious consideration of fine poetry, it is unimportant. What is of stimulating value is the spectacle of this plumed knight of an ampler and nobler day riding with great gusto at the littleness, the meanness, the "greyness" of modern life. As hungrily as ever Miniver Cheevy, he sighs for the days of romance and chivalry — but not for their outward forms merely. The courage, the daring, the sublime devotion — these he misses as Miniver misses the "grace of mediæval clothing".

The title poem recites, through a critical hour in the late war, the ballad of St. Barbara, the patron saint of artillery and of those in danger of sudden death. It is spirited, vivid, and has beauty. "Mediævalism" is a colorful piece of writing, on the theme of "all that men took too lightly, and all that they love too late". Satirical verses abound — in which the lords of the earth are fixed on a pin. And "Songs of Education" is a stinging satire on the warped littleness of modern life and its aims and processes. Altogether, here is good, thumping, virile verse.

This latest book of Mr. Untermeyer's is written out of an insurgent race consciousness. It is instinct with racial feeling — with a lively awareness of the majestic and colorful historical background, of the race's suffering and hardihood and achievement, of the promised fulfilments. Given this feeling, genuine and unobstructed — which in itself is so nearly pure poetry — plus Mr. Untermeyer's skill and range and vigor, and stirring poetry is assured. The title poem "Roast Leviathan" is an energetic envisioning of the promised feast for the chosen, the banquet with leviathan for fare. The poem moves with an easy velocity, with an unstudied, almost careless energy. Here is the spirit of eager acceptance of the heritage that waits — too long delayed, but never doubted. "Lost Jerusalem" has in it more of the Jew's consciousness of his bitter and magnificent history — with an evangelical note of divine mission. "Waters of Babylon", one of the most poignant poems in the book, is a lyric of personal love, alive in a race consciousness of old sorrow and hopelessness that suffuses the whole with pity. The love poems and the poems of social protest show Mr. Untermeyer in a familiar rôle. One regrets the inclusion of such undistinguished poems as "The Window", which is commonplace both in theme and treatment, and "Five Trees", a labored effort in analogy. And "Stand With Me Here" is unpersuasive poetizing. Through such carefully constructed conceits as these, "Ghetto Prostitute" and "Daughters of Jephthah" thrust with the convincing lineaments of passionate and suffering life. The division of the book entitled "Sixteen Etchings", including a number of sonnets on various themes, is accomplished verse; it is scarcely fine poetry, and the same may be said of "Insurrections". It is in the division of the book entitled "Waters of Babylon" that Mr. Untermeyer has made a unique and distinguished contribution to poetry.

"So There!" by Franklin P. Adams, conductor of "The Conning Tower" in the New York "World", is capital fun. Here is wit in abundance — smiling satire, rollicking humor, and excellent fooling of many sorts. America — the land of absurdities — is rich pasture for this sort of grazing, and not many of the contemporary earnest

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fads fail of a bite. The new poetry, smile week, Freudian extremes, fiction fads, and all the overserious pother so diverting to the emancipated are the mark of deadly gibes. There are, also, the usual "adaptations" of Horace. F. P. A's individual trick of turning the echoes of classical accent to the purposes of absurdity is present with a distinguishing and telling effect. It were nearly needless — in the case of this author — to mention the almost flawless skill in workmanship. The strictness with which the selections for the volume were made is worthy of emulation. It is that rare thing: a funny book without a dull page.

Mrs. Wilkinson's admirers will find in this latest book of hers the same joy in the out of doors — not to be confused with the attitudinizing of the "Nature" cult — that has characterized most of this writer's verse. Here, also, are her characteristic rhythms. It is a forthright music, not overgiven to delicate shadings and elusive accents. The style is suited to the matter, which is not troubled with subtleties. Mrs. Wilkinson stands flatfooted on the earth, foursquare to the winds of the world. She speaks with directness — sometimes with gusto, sometimes with tenderness — of the earth and the sky and the winds, of the fields and the stars and the waters. And if the poetry is not of the high and fine and immortal sort, it is appealing, and its spirit is contagious. Here and there are simple singing lyrics that poetry would be the poorer without. Such are "On Plover Hill", "Mother Song in Spring", and "Our Joys are Many". The title poem — containing some fine passages of power and chanting lyricisms — envisions the salvation of Manhattan through the ancient ministers of wind and rain and light. What one is particularly grateful for in all of Mrs. Wilkinson's work is the absence of poetizing and prettiness, and the frank, plainspoken delight in the themes of her poems and in life itself.

The Poems of Alice Meynell. (Complete Edition.) Charles Scribner's Sons.
Poems. By Wilfrid Scawen Blunt. Alfred A. Knopf.
The Ballad of St. Barbara. By Gilbert Keith Chesterton. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Roast Leviathan. By Louis Untermeyer. Harcourt, Brace and Co.
So There! By Franklin P. Adams. Doubleday, Page and Co.
The Great Dream. By Marguerite Wilkinson. The Macmillan Co.

A SCHOLAR DISCUSSES PUBLIC OPINION

By William Starr Myers

JUST ten years ago there appeared, from the pen of President Lowell of Harvard University, a book entitled "Public Opinion and Popular Government" which since that time has been considered the standard authority upon the subject. No better testimony to this fact could be desired than the estimates by such men as the late Albert Venn Dicey and James Bryce, both of whom spoke of the work as the greatest yet written in this field. For these reasons, the mere announcement that President Lowell has prepared another book of the same general character is bound to arouse interest among scholars and the reading public. Their keenest anticipations will not be disappointed when they experience the satisfaction of scanning this new volume.

It is a real pleasure, as well as satisfaction, to find a book so sound, adequate, and sane in its content. Also

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it is written, not with the brazen assurance of the tyro, but with the calm restraint of the thorough scholar. President Lowell's earlier work analyzed both public opinion and the mechanism through which it may be made effective. This later book stresses the former part of the subject and has as the object of its inquiry not a criticism of actual politics but a study of the process by which public opinion is formed and expressed. The discussion is predicated upon the definition of opinion as "the acceptance of one among two or more inconsistent views which are capable of being accepted by a rational mind as true". This acceptance of course is based upon conviction, resulting from either first-hand thought or reliance upon some trusted authority. Even in the latter case there remains the need for ability to choose the authority, as well as to make a sound judgment. As President Lowell says, "Many a man sits on the back platform of the train, insisting that he is on the engine, and that the train is going backwards." This, it may be remarked, is the common case with the radical, who often is entirely ignorant of history and is so desirous of going somewhere that he loses all mental orientation. He does not know past successes, much less past failures.

But President Lowell is a thorough American, and insists upon the need for personal responsibility in the formation of an opinion. It is upon this basis that our country and its institutions, Anglo-Saxon in character, were founded. As he well says, "A sense of personal responsibility for his opinions is perhaps the greatest duty that a citizen owes the public. . . . This is secured in large part by directing attention forcibly to the consequence of a course of conduct and the evil that may result from an error in judgment." In contrast to it, "The group directs the attention of its members to the general conviction that they are right and discourages the consideration of opinions opposed to those which they hold." Here we see the essential fallacy and unmoral tendency in much of the present agitation for "social" as distinguished from individual responsibility. President Lowell rightly thinks that in the immediate future the public probably has less to fear from personal than from cooperative selfishness. Blocs in Congress and organized "propagandas" outside would seem to be adequate proof of the point.

The whole spirit of the book makes a call upon the best that is in our people, for it is the departure from the fundamental principles of individual responsibility that explains much of the crass materialism and the vagaries of the mob that go by the name of "progressive thought". The reading of this volume should prove both a purgative and a tonic to the mental processes of our best citizenship. It should be worthy of careful study especially by politicians, journalists, and others whose work causes them to deal with mankind in the aggregate. For mob psychology is not public opinion, since it lacks the element of settled conviction. And the men and women with convictions, formed only after long and well thought out study, are the people upon whose shoulders rests the future of this country in particular, and even of democracy in general.

Public Opinion in War and Peace. By A. Lawrence Lowell. Harvard University Press.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

AT the present moment, with a veritable plethora of "self-help" literature flooding the bookshops, it is quite necessary that a new book touching on the subject should strike out from a new angle. In "American Nerves and the Secret of Suggestion" (Century) by Anne Sturges Duryea there are two objectives — warning to those who may, unknowingly, injure themselves with the new creed by failing to apply discretion, and to those who have tried and failed to benefit. Putting aside the question of whether or not the reader is a follower of Coué, it must be apparent to him that Mrs. Duryea has labored conscientiously and intelligently. Explanations of the Hardy doctrine, self-hypnosis, psychoanalysis, and numberless other aspects of this subject are set down, clearly, concisely, and without bias.

To fashion a book on how to write stories for children seems an odd task. However, it is doubtless a useful one, and Mabel L. Robinson of Columbia University has done a good piece of work in "Juvenile Story Writing" (Dutton). It has always seemed to us that the best way to learn how to write for children is to remember what you liked when you were a child or, at least, to try your own methods first vocally on the youngsters.

Everything Russian being fashionable this year, a book that describes the leading figures in that turbulent country should be of interest to many. "Mirrors of Moscow" by Louise Bryant (Seltzer) fulfils its purpose in giving competent portraits of all the Russian officials that one has ever heard of, and some that one has not. They are cut and dried sketches, journalistically written, that have the precision of a textbook. One would be willing to take a Bible oath that every word in them is rigidly truthful; for this very reason, they are not so interesting as they might be.

Upton Sinclair has taken American higher education as his theme in "The Goose-Step" (Sinclair). Whether he proves his contention — that the interlocking directorates which control railroads, steel, oil, and money, also control the colleges and are using them to teach folly, greed, slavery, and hate — does not so much matter. After all, he does show that the universities are not responsive or responsible to those who pay the tuition fees; that the instructors are underpaid, the victims of university politics and individual caprice; that students are not taught original thinking; that radical thought and radical utterances are usually frowned on and often punished; that doctors' theses are too often careful investigations of foolishness; that the honorary degree is a joke. All this may be "old stuff" but it required somebody to say so. Grant that sometimes the author is inaccurate and at other times he has misinterpreted his facts — there is enough material in the book to show where improvement in education is sadly wanted.

The first award of the Authors Club for the most significant book of the year went to E. A. Robinson. Lloyd Morris's essay on "The Poetry of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Edwin Arlington Robinson" (Doran) is a tribute to America's foremost poet. The book is a comprehensive appraisal of all Robinson's work since his first slim volume of verse. As Mr. Morris puts it: "Of all contemporary American poets none has discovered to us, as lovers of poetry, a larger measure of poetic experience than Edwin Arlington Robinson; nor does the art of any make a more imperious demand upon our normal, but sometimes unconscious capacity for experiencing life poetically." All of which is very true. The discussion of Robinson's ideas, men, plays, legends, and history is plentifully illustrated with selections from his verse. On the whole the essay serves to make this poet's audience better acquainted with the man, who has till now basked in a sort of mystic light.

To Roland B. Dixon, in "The Racial History of Man" (Scribner), a race is "a group defined and characterized by certain physical characteristics". His problem is to discover how many such groups can be distinguished, what is their present distribution, what is their origin, and how they spread and interacted. Of the large number of physical criteria available Professor Dixon selects three — the cranial or cephalic index, the altitudinal or length-height index, and the nasal index — all ratios of skull measurements. These, in association with other characters of facial form, degree of prognathism, and brain size, furnish him with a number of types; rather, he considers them archetypes which do not exist anywhere today but the blending of which has produced present day races. From this point of view, he points out, there has never been, nor is there today, such a thing as a permanent race. If that is so there is no reason for believing in the existence of the archetypes of his hypothesis, and hence in his polygenistic explanation of the ultimate origin of man. The book traces the movements of racial groups over the surface of the earth which have resulted in their blending, and ends with the suggestion that the process of blending be controlled so that only the fittest may be absorbed.

Much of the fiction that one finds on the market is fairly amusing and passably written. Somehow or other, nothing more is expected of it. "Pleasant enough", however, will hardly do for verse, even very light verse, when it is gathered into a volume. And that is the main complaint against "Versiflage" (Fly). Percy Waxman evidently enjoyed writing it. Most of the poems are dexterous; some of them are clever. One can spend many a pleasant moment nibbling at the book. Still, despite the author's disclaimer, one looks for more than just that.

In "The Flower of Stars" (published by the author, Washington, D. C.) Opal Whiteley urges the beauty of the virtues; she sets forth an absolute, moral, non-existent beauty. Its home is in the soul of man; its frustration in hell; its consummation in heaven. Now these are three concepts that can at best be pictured in artificial, stereotyped, rigid images derived from Dante, Milton, and Bible legends. Miss Whiteley forgets that there is no such thing as abstract beauty: it is always embodied. The poet shares his enjoyment of it by making his readers see and hear and feel it. But Miss Whiteley preaches it; she has the unfortunate vagueness commonly associated with the mystical type of mind. In

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her verses "Beauty" is capitalized, but not created. Her approach to child psychology in "The Little Comet", Brother Gray Owl", and certain stanzas of "The New Little Boy" is imaginative and human. But her attempt at articulating a vision of beautiful virtues is homicidal.

With the skill — and the stridency — of a professional debater, Harold Cox, editor of "The Edinburgh Review", presents in "The Problem of Population" (Putnam) all the arguments for birth control. His brief is that of Malthus modernized: too many births means too many mouths for too little food; poverty, disease, death, insanity, war, racial degeneration result. Mr. Cox argues masterfully. With lucid simplicity he manipulates an array of carefully interpreted statistics, illuminated by anecdote and simile such as to interest and convince the general reader. More thoughtful minds may be offended by his protesting too much and too confidently, even if they can't and don't want to refute his reasoning.

Professor Norman Foerster has succeeded in putting into his very able book "Nature in American Literature" (Macmillan) a refreshing and rather unusual out of door quality. In these essays on some American poets and prose writers, and their kinship with nature as portrayed in their work, it is almost as though we were out in the country having talks illustrated by the things of nature themselves. Particularly did we like the papers on Thoreau and Bryant. At the end of the book there is an excellent index.

Both practical hints and hints for beauty are to be found in "The Book of Building and Interior Decorating" edited by Reginald T. Townsend (Doubleday, Page), a handsomely printed and illustrated book. The suggestions given are not only for the large house but for the small home as well. The garage is taken into consideration, also such problems as the restoration of paintings, the care of textiles, the closet — so close to every woman's heart! A good book for anyone who cares for the surroundings in which he lives.

"Casual Wanderings in Ecuador" by Blair Niles (Century) is well named. There are no startling attempts to arouse your wonder. Perhaps because of this lack of strained effort on the part of Mrs. Niles the book stands forth clearly. It seems to be the result of the work of an author who has an adventurous spirit, a cultured mind, and observant eyes. The pictures too are satisfactory in sustaining the interest of the book. We have the feeling that we will never now be quite contented until we have seen the Main Street in Baños! Amusing too are the revelations of what news from North America filters through and is enjoyed. "The only item which I can recall had to do with a boxing-match in New Jersey," the author tells us in regard to the local newspapers.

"If Britain Is to Live" by Norman Angell (Putnam) is a book that should be read by everyone who desires a clear, concise, thoughtful, and acute statement of the problems confronting Europe today. Mr. Angell believes that the future of Great Britain, even the future of white civilization, is overshadowed by a great menace, the menace of the animosities and the shortsighted or dishonest and "pandering" policy that at present dominate the world. If we are to save

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ourselves from the cavern that yawns before us, contends the author, we must turn about in our tracks, cast aside the "old barbarian creed" that enslaves us, and inaugurate a policy of "economic internationalism". Mr. Angell writes logically and with conviction, and his latest book is worthy of attention as respectful and widespread as greeted his celebrated work, "The Great Illusion".

The latest contribution to the Teddy addenda is "Roosevelt as the Poets Saw Him", edited by Charles Hanson Towne (Scribner). To these poets he is a modern knight of adventure. They celebrate his daring in action more frequently than his political activities, symbolizing his magnetism in pictures drawn from his life as Rough Rider, as hunter, as westerner. But like the minor writers at the court of Augustus, they labor under the disadvantage of being obliged — both by a sincere admiration and by the nature of the occasion — to praise. Wallace Irwin writes verses with the hearty flavor of Roosevelt himself; Edith Wharton and Russell J. Wilbur make poetry of homage; Edgar Lee Masters gives us a tragic and beautiful likeness. The other poems are mediocre; worthy as tributes, since they are heartfelt, but insufficient as poetry.

To the student of psychology "Behaviorism and Psychology" (University Bookstore) by Dr. A. A. Roback is timely. Answering the gibe that psychology has lost its self, its soul, its mind and consciousness, the author retorts that not psychology but certain psychologists have. This is essentially the position which Dr. Roback takes in the present controversy between the radicals or behaviorists and the conservatives or introspectionists. He traces, in what is the best part of the work, the antecedents and growth of the behaviorist movement. The rest of his discussion is purely controversial. In showing the logical fallacies of behaviorism the author has performed a real service, although his vehement statements leave the question open to further debate. As a bibliography of the controversy, the book is a valuable contribution to the ultimate clarification of the subject.

Robert Lynd begins "Books and Authors" (Putnam) somewhat apologetically: "Undoubtedly, books about books are among the least necessary of books." But he finds it more natural for a civilized man to write a book about books than a book about birds or butterflies. And so while the critic may not be found among the hundred best books, "no collection of the thousand best would be complete without him." There is, moreover, sufficient reason why Mr. Lynd should be included. He writes with intelligence, charm, and humor, and with an expertness and a distinction that seem peculiarly English. In addition to essays on books and authors, more or less modern, there are two short essays on criticism. Mr. Lynd considers it the task of criticism "to create in one's own mind an image of a writer's genius and then to try to clear the minds of one's readers so that the same image will be reflected in theirs." Analysis must therefore lead to synthesis.

Retracing his faux pas into the nebulous realms of the group mind and democracy, William McDougall has written an "Outline of Psychology" (Scribner), designed as an introductory textbook, presumably for college

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

students. Professor McDougall states the two principal approaches to the subject as follows: "(1) that of mechanistic science, which interprets all its processes as mechanical sequences of cause and effect, and (2) that of the sciences of mind, for which purposive striving is a fundamental category, which regard the process of purposive striving as radically different from mechanical sequence." He is an avowed vitalist, confessing that his book is largely a polemic against all mechanistic psychology — which he admits is preponderant at the present time — and on behalf of purposive psychology. As such it is based upon the work of William James, to whom it is dedicated, and approaches the processes of the human mind, not through the nervous system or the senses, but through the processes of the animal mind.

Horace Wyndham has proved conclusively that modern reminiscences can be written without upsetting firmly established ideas regarding the financial, intellectual, and social aristocracies. He has proved that such reminiscences can be written without hurting the feelings of former hostesses and friends. In addition to which things he has proved that such discreet and restrained information as he chooses to use can be made exceptionally inviting. His style more than makes up for any absence of shocks. "The Nineteen Hundreds" (Seltzer) is the title he has given to a volume full of anecdotes and information of persons known and unknown. The quality which he brings into this volume that makes it stand out from so many of the memoirs more or less always in vogue, is a rippling sense of humor. He does not take himself, his ancestors, or his acquaintances too seriously. Because Mr. Wyndham is a professional writer — something else that many of the memoir composers cannot claim — much of his book is full of references to literary figures and incidents in the journalistic world. Authors are generally known by their published works. In this case one's eyes are opened to personalities not confined to board covers and distorted by publishers' blurbs. There are pages and pages of good friendly chuckles.

"The Poetical Works of Leigh Hunt" (Oxford) is a volume of 776 pages of small type, which means that, except for persons who may wish to see every fragment that Hunt created, this first collected edition since 1860 is decidedly ample. The book has been edited by H. S. Milford who furnishes a non-critical introduction in which he says: "Though not complete, I think that this edition gives all — perhaps more than all — the poems, original and translated, which are necessary for a fair judgment of Hunt's claims as a poet." In addition, the book contains a bibliography, chronologically arranged, a complete index of first lines as well as titles, a chronological table of Hunt's life and times, and a great many notes. One poem — "The Nymphs"—Mr. Milford says is printed here for the first time since its original appearance.

It is by no means easy to conjecture how a statesman dead a hundred years would act were he to come to life again; yet that is precisely what Arthur Hendrick Vandenberg has attempted in his volume entitled "If Hamilton Were Here Today" (Putnam). Hamilton, according to Mr. Vandenberg's view, was "the master craftsman of American Government"; his principles form the very backbone of our Constitution, the blood and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sinew of our political institutions. On the basis of the great statesman's utterances in "The Federalist", Mr. Vandenberg has attempted to ascertain how he would act were he to be confronted with present day problems. The book, interesting in its thesis, is developed plausibly, thoughtfully, and with undoubted sincerity.

The name of Scotland Yard is invoked in nearly every self-respecting detective story. To the general reader, as well as to those addicted to tales of crime, the appearance of Sir Basil Thomson's "My Experiences at Scotland Yard" (Doubleday, Page) should be gratifying. Sir Basil's recollections cover eight years (1913-1921) in office as chief of the Criminal Investigation Bureau; and together with chapters on military spies, royal pretenders, and unusual criminals caught up in the meshes of his organization, offer an account of Rasputin's death on "evidence as to what actually happened". While the chapters of the volume devoted to the methods and achievements of Scotland Yard are really interesting, the case-hardened conservatism of the routined government official which informs the last three political chapters seems unilluminating.

Several amiable philosophers get together in "The Interpreters" by A. E. (Macmillan) and discuss politics from temporal and eternal standpoints — comparing the government of God with the governmental practices of man. Those thoroughly practised in the art of skipping will enjoy "The Interpreters". There are many weighty thoughts and apt sayings, but such an endless flow of beautiful words camouflages them that unless one skips the book makes slow, at times tedious, reading. It is called a symposium, but unhappily reminds us that the ancient Greek dialogues are still unsurpassed.

"A Lady of the Salons", by D. E. Enfield (Scribner), is a sprightly book of literary, social, and political gossip, which gives an entertaining account of the life and activities of Louise Colet, "she who compromised Victor Cousin, ridiculed Alfred de Musset, vilified Gustave Flaubert and tried to assassinate Alphonse Kerr". Mme. Colet was the original of Flaubert's Madame Bovary, a crinolined disciple of Garibaldi, one of those literary Sapphos of the hectic Second Empire whose lives, if irregular, were never monotonous. Mr. Enfield gives us an enjoyable and atmospheric account of the authoress of "Les Dévots du Grand Monde", stories of the crimes and follies of the religious, and of her circle.

Though Jeanne Robert Foster has published three volumes of verse, "Rock-Flower" (Boni, Liveright) has all the earmarks of a first attempt. It is complete from the ode to the dead notable, through inscriptions for Japanese prints, love sonnets, to prose poems. The pattern of the book could not have been better. But the verse is immature, unforceful and pretty. As a first volume this would have been promising, for the author has a lyric quality, a variety of poetic subjects that are not ordinary. Yet her work is interesting without being compelling, as poetry should be, fanciful in subject but not in wording.

Such topics as "The Office of Literature", "Books Old and New", "Book-Buying", "Book-Binding", "Book-Selling", "Poets Laureate", "Christian Evidences", "Parliamentary Candidates", "Authors and Critics", "Bookworms", "First Editions", "The League

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Nations", and "A Rogue's Memoirs" may or may not invite the American consumer of the twentieth century printed word. Yet they comprise a good share of "The Collected Essays and Addresses of the Rt. Hon. Augustine Birrell, 1880-1920" (Scribner). However, competent essays on such somewhat less abstract subjects as William Cowper, William Hazlitt, Charles Lamb, Carlyle, Emerson, George Borrow, Robert Browning, and Matthew Arnold constitute much of the first two of these three volumes of English minor prose by the famous author of "Obiter Dicta". One-fourth a Charles Lamb, three-fourths mere dilettante journalist, this belated gentle essayist is often a model of how to begin, continue, and end the essay.

The study, the labor, the insight and tact that are concentrated in "Abnormal Behavior", by Irving J. Sands, M. D. and Phyllis Blanchard, Ph. D. (Moffat, Yard) can be but inadequately praised. The book defines and describes, with the aid of illustrative cases, the main types of abnormal behavior and suggests or explains their physical, emotional, and mental causes. It considers the individual's environment as a source of his aberrance and also the effect of his delinquency upon society. The excellent chapter dealing with the physical basis of behavior condenses material generally used for an entire volume. This book does not pander to morbid curiosity; it is a scientific exposition, simple and fascinating, of information woefully needed.

Conventional travel books, like garrulous bores, we have always with us. "A Woman Tenderfoot in Egypt" (Dodd, Mead) by Grace Thompson Seton falls quite readily into this category. The title is indicative of the text; even the prosaic, unimaginative photographs of the author's party sitting astride camels in front of the Sphinx, are here.

To some, a book is a book. To many, however, a book is a personality. (Platitudinous, we grant, but incontrovertible). Whenever there comes along a volume so carefully bound, so delightfully composed, and so artistically plain as is "Greek Biology and Medicine", by Henry Osborn Taylor (Marshall Jones), we feel impelled to read every word. The glamour of a good stage setting has a powerful appeal. This pocket volume, one of a uniform series entitled "Our Debt to Greece and Rome", lives sturdily up to its typographical promise. The voice of authority sounds throughout an absorbing story of modernity's debt for many of our medical and biological axioms. The author acts as a sounding board from which the voices of Hippocrates, Aristotle, Anaximander resound much, be it said, to the detriment of modern medicine, which often fatuously smiles when we gape at its tremendous knowledge, rarely giving credit to the great Greek and Roman medical men whose first experimentation laid the foundation of our present knowledge of the human body, its ills and their cure. If the present volume is a criterion of its companions, the series should prove invaluable.

The racial question in Hungary occupies a prominent place in Count Paul Teleki's "The Evolution of Hungary and Its Place in European History" (Macmillan). These papers, now gathered in book form, were originally given as a series of lectures at Williams College in 1921. Count Teleki's assertion is that Hungary's recolo-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nization by non-Magyar people at the instigation of the Austrian Empire, after the depopulation caused by the Turkish conquest in 1526, prepared Hungary's future in the twentieth century. Count Teleki, at one time premier of Hungary, speaks authoritatively of the changes in Hungary's political status as well as the social and economic trend. His book is calculated to provoke not only discussion, but a revived interest in Hungary — especially in this country, where activity and restlessness form the root of all development and progress.

"Annotations" by Susan Miles (Oxford) is just another book of verse. In it there is nothing delightful, nothing unusual, no particular singing tone. It is verse that is easy to read, that at least is honest, but that leaves you with no joy. It is the sort of stuff in which the poet cries, "If you were weak, my strength should make you strong" and "If you were poor, love my purse should be." I think the best two lines in the book are:

She'd sooner seem promiscuous than a prude.
Her motto runs: "I am not shy, I'm rude."

People who like to read books about books (and Mr. Newton has proved them to be a goodly number) have another treat in store for them. "Books in Black or Red" (Macmillan) by Edmund Lester Pearson is as pleasant a collection of book talk as one can find in a year's reviewing. Mr. Pearson has written a group of informal sketches on subjects that interest him, and before you have read much of each, you find that they interest you too. There is one chapter, "The Lost First Folio", which is worthy to take its stand somewhere between Mark Twain and Stephen Leacock.

One of the most notable and most significant contributions to the ever growing literature on social psychology, is Irwin Edman's "Human Traits and Their Social Significance" (Houghton Mifflin). It is a book that would cause the man on the street to discard his slovenly methods of thinking and haphazard philosophizing, were he seriously to consider the material presented therein. Unfortunately, books such as these never really reach the mass, either because they are written primarily for college students, or because they are so expensive. However, to the person who is intent upon getting a sincere, thorough, and authoritative survey of thought, instinct, habit, and emotion, no price would be too great to pay for Dr. Edman's book. In it one gets a sort of panorama view of the processes of human nature, from man's simple inborn impulses and needs to the most complete fulfilment of these in the deliberate activities of religion, art, science, and morals.

Here is a history of the middle ages, that swashbuckling period when men were men and women were poisoners, and kings uttered hard, sardonic epigrams. Fr. Funck-Brentano tells the story in "The Middle Ages" (Putnam), and tells it with many profuse quotations from historians and poets, leaning rather toward the latter. A novel way to relate history, but a dull way. The book is complete, starting from the "night of the ninth century" to the breaking of the fifteenth. The art of miniature, the building of the cathedrals and universities, the tournaments, wars, feudalism — all are there, told in prose and verse and between quotation marks, but told nevertheless. And the translation by Elizabeth O'Neill from the French is a good one.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Horum Omnium Fortissimi Sunt Belgae

IT is the state of the world and not of my mind that motivates a return to the theme I touched on in THE BOOKMAN of last March. In that number I defended the proposition that English should be elevated to the rank of an international language. In this number I wish to pass in review the outstanding instances of speech pride and prejudice, to break by implication still another lance for English, and to show, through the medium of a big story condensed, that however much the various peoples may be doing in the field of linguistic forwardness, "of all of these the Belgians are the bravest". For they seem willing to risk the very unity of their country in order to carry their point.

What is taking place in the realm of mother tongues today, though not necessarily one of the things to worry about, is ineluctable proof that nationalism follows internationalism with as much docility as a soldier follows a mess sergeant: in either case the one feeds on the other. The nations of the world — there are some sixty of them — are more completely leagued at present, and are watching each other more vigilantly, than ever in the history of the animal kingdom. For this very reason they are more determined than ever to have their chief virtues — symbolized in the case before us by their native tongues — placed on exhibition. To cite all these cases of speech chauvinism is impossible; nor is it necessary, for a few will answer the purpose. Let us consider them quite at random.

The British have not prepared a glossary to Sinclair Lewis merely in order to make him plain, but to make it plain that there is an English as opposed to an American language. Nor do the British continue to have the examination papers of their overseas university students sent "home" for reading and grading because they distrust their dominion officials: it is done to preserve the prestige of the government language. Iceland has perfected an arrangement by which she does not have to submit her official documents to her king in Copenhagen in two languages: Icelandic and Danish. She sends them only in her own tongue. With her it is not a matter of saving time and postage, but of showing her authority. Denmark, on the other hand, nearly precipitated a revolution a few months ago when some doughty Danes suggested that Danish nouns be spelled with small letters. Not at all, shrieked the patriots; Danish has long been known as a language in which substantives are capitalized!

Just as Yiddish grows in popularity, classical Hebrew is revived. The Irish would resurrect Gaelic, the Norwegians are fighting the good fight for the national *landsmaal:* they must have a language different from that of Sweden who ruled over them until 1905, and different from that of Denmark who ruled over them for centuries preceding 1905. Finland, inhabited by three million people thirty thousand of whom are Swedes, is rushing about in a attempt to eliminate the Swedish language from official circles. Poland informs a sym-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pathetic world that hers will soon be the leading member of the Slavic group of tongues now that opportunity has at last been given her to eradicate the hated Russian characters. Austria comes out for the first time on record with a history of Austrian as opposed to German literature. Brazil is in closer linguistic touch with Lisbon today than she has been since Pinzon discovered the place. Lithuania stands up and demands the privilege of the floor on this count: we have the most mellifluous of tongues, and as to favorite sons, witness Immanuel Kant and Hermann Sudermann!

Of language movements in minor keys there is no end, except in so far as the world has an end. Germany has been busy as a humble (really *bumble)* bee for eight years trying to root out all words of non-Germanic origin. She pleads for *Unterhaltung* in the place of *divertissement.* After all this trying, she has succeeded, fairly well, in having *Kraftwagen* take the place of *Automobil.* In all such hyphenated countries as Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, and Alsace-Lorraine the situation is much more confused and acute than Wolf-Havas-Reuter-A.P. combined — but "limited" — would lead us to believe. China is trying to coin and concoct an entirely modern language, and she ought to have it. Switzerland, however, is at almost perfect peace. Proud Helvetia rises and remarks: I am the mistress of five different tongues, none of which is really my own, but I am not going to become distraught on this account; for my quintuple tongue draws many men of many minds within my borders all of whom have to settle their accounts before leaving.

In this country the one hundred per-cent American (fancy giving a grade of 100, which is perfect, to a country in which 634,000 people died a violent death last year!) would suppress the foreign language press. Another American, who gives out grades, term and final, to college students, would build up an artificial language of which *Knabino* would be the word for "female boy". He defends himself on the ground that *puella* (girl) is the feminine and diminutive of *puer* (boy). As philology this is fair; as hygiene it is all crisscrossed. And finally, the Simplified Spelling Board has been revived after a few years of war hibernation. This board was organized in 1907, with the generous assistance of the late Andrew Carnegie. After years of toil and trouble, it comes back to life with the grand report that "about 200 of the 300 words originally recommended for simplification have been adopted by 600 newspapers".

This board, composed of some men of singular distinction, is obviously unmindful of the fact that, apart from *Kinsprit* which Morley has persuaded "The Bowling Green" to take on, hundreds of words have been introduced into the English language since 1907, while hundreds of others have been modified and simplified quite without its guidance, counsel, or friendship. It must take real courage to come out openly for simplified spelling.

But of them all the Belgians are the bravest. How they won their freedom as an immediate result of a performance of Auber's "La Muette de Portici" (August 25, 1830), how they routed the Dutch and drove them across the borders, how they converted, from their point of view, such words as "Nassau" and "Orange" into terms of contempt, is one of the most inspiring series of episodes known to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the evolution of liberty. Then came their national anthem, "La Brabançonne" (The Maid of Brabant). The first four stanzas were written, presumably on September 27, 1830, during the battles in the streets of Brussels with the Dutch, by Alexandre Jenneval (or by Hippolyte Dechet, if you prefer to refer to the author as the son of his other father, for his mother was twice married). François Van Campenhout of Brussels set it to music. M. Jenneval, born at Lyon in 1801, had lived through the Paris revolution of July, 1830. Hearing that Brussels had a revolution of her own, he hastened up, joined the forces, sang in the opera at night and fought during the day until killed at Lierre on October 18, 1830. His brother, also of Lyon and a volunteer, took his place, added the fifth stanza, and thus made the song complete. The last stanza was sung for the first time at the burial of Alexandre Jenneval.

All went well until 1860. In that year, Charles Rogier (1800-1885), who had served his country so loyally and in so many different capacities, was made Minister of Foreign Affairs. The position seemingly made him more tolerant; he must have been influenced by the *foreign* phase of his portfolio. He felt that "La Brabançonne" was a bit too hard on the Hollanders. Consequently he revised it and made it a song of peace and friendship by striking out all the unkind lines and inserting such expressions as this:

> Belges, Bataves, plus de guerres!
> *Les peuples libres sont amis.*

Campenhout's music had to be tamed down in similar fashion. Naturally: you cannot sing the Dangerous Dan McGrew and "Thou art so like a flower" to the same music. Other versions followed in the wake of Rogier's, with the result that during the world war the Belgians themselves hardly knew what to sing or what to play when "La Brabançonne" was requested.

And now the Belgian Royal Academy of French Language and Literature, that praiseworthy institution founded three years ago to foster an intelligent love for things French, has started a movement to have these later and spurious versions of "La Brabançonne" thrown out, and to effect a complete and speedy return to the original words by Jenneval and the original music by Campenhout. The movement should be, and very likely will be, a success. France herself is supporting it without reservation or qualification.

This outbreak of language patriotism in Belgium was started by another which thus far has been alarmingly successful: the Flemish movement. Hardly had Holland taken over Belgium in 1815, after the Congress of Vienna, when William I of Holland established the University of Ghent (1816). From 1830 on, the Belgians were quite anxious to have Ghent as French as could be, for they wished to get as far as possible away from the Dutch of Holland. A few months ago, Ghent was made, by a vote of 85 to 83, a Flemish university. It is a pity. On March 22 last the attempt to establish still another Flemish university at Bruges was defeated by a vote of 80 to 48, with 4 absentees. It is not a pity. The language of Belgium, civic and educational, should be, it would seem from a distance, French.

How all this will eventuate no man can tell; for no man knows what may happen when patriotism gets started — and language patriotism is the most

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passionate of all. If you doubt the assertion, try it out at home: tell some gentleman who is not a stranger to civic pride that he speaks with an accent; that he uses localisms; that his tongue betrays his origin.

If a good book were to be written on the present status of languages throughout the world, it would be highly illuminating in a general way, and it would prove a number of points concerning which light would be extremely welcome. It would show that now is the last of all times to try to put an artificial language through; that English or any other of the natural languages can be adopted as international only with the distinct understanding that it is in no way to be officialed into a supertongue; that one's mother tongue is infinitely more than merely the medium of thought expression: one's mother tongue is the articulate and articulated breath from off one's soul; and that the language situation is fraught with graver problems in Belgium than in any other country — Q. jam E. D.

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

Notes from France

THIS spring's harvest of French books is particularly rich in youthful productions, and the publishers who played safe with best sellers by elderly writers are, for the present, losing money. Paul Morand, Raymond Radiguet are monopolizing attention, and the market. If the buyers have extra cash it will be invested in Louis Hémon ("La Belle que Voilà"), the successful author of "Maria Chapdelaine", or, if their taste is conservative, in "Le Fleuve de Feu" by François Mauriac and those delightful prose-poem portraits by Eugène Marsan, called "Passantes".

Mauriac's new novel is worthy of "Le Baiser au Lépreux", and marks this young author for a brilliant future. I am willing to bet on his early reception into the Academy, and the honors in store for him are well deserved. A traditionalist and a Catholic, he has reintroduced strength and fire into the "idealistic" novel, showing that vigor was not the privilege of the sordid. This is particularly significant at a time when the last veterans of naturalism are sinking into worthless exploitation of worn out themes. Mauriac, who belongs to the French southwest, is a good representative of a family of writers which in the past has proved neither reckless nor emasculated, but passionately intelligent and intelligently passionate.

Still the sale of Mauriac's books remains within reasonable limits. The sales of Morand, who is younger, and of Radiguet, who is very much younger, stand in an increasing proportion. The latter wrote, when he was seventeen, a novel appearing now, "Le Diable au Corps", whose hero is like a new incarnation of Gide's "Immoralist" complex. A nice, lively quarrel is raging about this book, which some critics consider as capital, others as negligible. My own opinion, if John Farrar insists on having it, is that the personal mastery in self-conduct, the coolness, the indifference to others shown by the protagonist may go to the making of a masterpiece — the next book, perhaps. But Radiguet will have to deal with what really matters to his self-centred soul, namely the building or discovery of his own character and personality, not the relations of that personality to others and to the exterior world, which are the lesser objects of his passion. "Le Diable au

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Corps" fails to give the sense of any vital resistance and almost of vital substance, because it tells of the minor expressions of Radiguet's hero: his adventures. Let us hear of his struggles and achievements as an architect of himself, and we may have a great book. Perhaps the present one is an approach to it.

As for Morand's "Fermé la Nuit", it is a sequel to last year's successful "Ouvert la Nuit", which contained six portraits of women traced with a pen often dipped in sulphuric acid. Here we have four portraits of men, sculptured in trinitrotoluol — with Morand dancing an athletic and delicate fire dance around their images. If types of such destructive capacity go multiplying in the world of tomorrow, the collective suicide of the race is not far off. But its last moments will not be dull.

Pierre MacOrlan has added "Malice" to the list of his works. Its inspiration recalls that of "Le Nègre Léonard", based on witchcraft, traveling, and adventure. We are now expecting his "Vénus Internationale", which promises to create some sensation.

Thus the pure and the impure are strangely mixed in today's production, and it is hard to tell whether virtue or vice will ultimately triumph — especially as a wicked best seller is generally a signal for a wave of severity. Just a wave, though.

Three notable translations should be pointed out. That of Blake's "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell", by André Gide; of Bertrand Russell's "Mysticism and Logic", by Jean de Menasce (Payot); and of Ananda Coomaraswamy's "The Dance of Siva", by Madeleine Rolland (Rieder), with an introduction by Romain Rolland.

Among art books, a good volume on Picasso, by M. Raynal (Crès), much illustrated; and at the Nouvelle Revue Française two small volumes of the collection of modern painters, one on Picasso and the other on Derain — these two names being decidedly the most influential in the young generation of artists.

PIERRE DE LANUX

Nietzsche, Art Books, and a New Prophet

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, the philosopher of the peaks, one moment considering, in deepest melancholy of thought, the origin of tragedy, the next welcoming, in fulminating optimism, the advent of the man who should be more than man — this physically weak genius, who on account of that contempt for weakness which only the delicate feel was considered to be a worshiper of brute strength and even hailed or abused as the spiritual father of the world war, is emerging from the mists of these absurd fantasmagorias. The Germans, infected as they easily are by the opinions of other nations, have to some extent neglected the much misquoted one; but this period is over, and at the moment there is a boom in Nietzschean literature. Foremost stands the big two volume "Nietzsche" by Heinrich Rőmer (Klinkhardt and Biermann, Leipzig), a book which won the Nietzsche prize last year, and which furnishes a most exhaustive survey of Nietzsche the man, the writer, the disciple, the prophet, his development and his teachings. A particularly interesting point is that concerning Nietzsche's style. Nietzsche himself, never unduly modest, used to declare

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that he had brought the German language to perfection. He pronounced himself the third link in the chain of development of which the other two were Luther and Goethe, and affirmed that he was more masculine than Goethe and less rough and ready than Luther. His biographer, while couching his admiration in more measured terms, admits that there is something to be said for these claims, and that Nietzsche really did use the German language in new ways and extend its field of expression.

In "Nietzsche als Richter Unserer Zeit" (Nietzsche as Judge over Our Times) by Gundolf and Hildebrand, published by Hirt, Breslau, an attempt is made to show that Nietzsche anticipated the evil times awaiting European intellectualism; and in the midst of the prosperity of his era, perceived all the seeds of spiritual decay. Friedrich Muckle's "Friedrich Nietzsche and the Collapse of Civilization" (Duncker and Humblot, Munich) shows Nietzsche as a ruthless iconoclast among the tottering towers of civilization, but at the same time holds him up as a joyful guide along new ways. Other Nietzsche books appear in the form of commentaries and explanations of Nietzsche's finest work "Also Sprach Zarathustra", in an addition to the "Educator" series which already includes "Kant as Educator" and "Bismarck as Educator", and in a study of Nietzschean ethics by Professor Peininger and a discussion by Walter Dahms of Nietzsche's relations to music.

An exceedingly valuable book, of an almost alarming thoroughness, is "Kunst-Pädagogik" by Hans Cornelius (Eugen Rentsch, Munich). Cornelius starts out with a bold proclamation that practically all architecture and arts and crafts today are on false tracks, either clinging in a sterile helplessness to historical models or plunging without standards into wild formlessness in an attempt to achieve originality. In order that our houses may give us the same æsthetic satisfaction which we feel in contemplating the beautiful buildings of past centuries, and our articles of daily use become satisfying to the innate sense of form, Cornelius demands and works out a plan for a complete reform of art teaching. First of all, the instructors must be taught anew.

In connection with this bold yet reasoned reformer of the "Pedagogy of Art", another new book attains a peculiar interest. This is "Kunstgewerbe", a report upon contemporary arts and crafts in Prussia (Ernst Wasmuth, Berlin). This beautifully printed book, with its wealth of illustrations from photographs and in color, may profitably be studied in conjunction with Cornelius's criticisms of the art forms and art teaching of the day. It is sometimes in confirmation and sometimes in refutation of his arguments. Although the handsome volume proves that a great deal of creditable and valuable work is being done — the illustrations show the cream of it — it is possible that the Cornelius method might be tried with success. The lack of settled standards for modern applied art is undoubtedly a handicap.

The same publishers have a delightful series under the title "Orbis Pictus", which does indeed aim at representing the world in pictures, as a glance at the recent titles will show. The last numbers are "A Book of Masks of All Ages"; "Islamic Architecture"; "Classicism in France"; "Primitive Japanese Woodcuts"; "The Oldest German Paintings"; "Mediæval Work in Ivory"; "Chinese Miniature

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sculptures". Each of these neat black and white books, the title surrounded by a band of color, contains a short, scholarly review of the subject and a number of illustrations from photographs. The series might be termed an art education for the busy man. A beautiful art book of great historical and archæological value is "Die Burg von Athen" (Schoetz and Parrhysius, Berlin), a description of the Acropolis by Martin Schede, who embellishes his picturesque account of the old Athenian citadel with many full page photographs and smaller sketches.

Another famous art firm, Klinkhardt and Biermann, Leipzig, publishes a splendid art series under the title "Junge Kunst", which provides an admirable and invaluable signpost along the intricate ways of modern art. Each volume contains a critical survey of the artist's work with about forty illustrations and a frontispiece in color. The new volumes are studies of Vincent Van Gogh, Henri Rousseau, August Macke, M. Kisling, Heinrich Nauen, and Paul Cézanne.

Thomas Mann has gone over to the occultists, no doubt to the delight of his neighbor, Gustav Meyrink. Like the latter, he has no patience with spiritualism, but certain mystic experiences at an occult sitting, at which he was convinced that trickery was impossible, have caused him to declare his conviction that occult manifestations are a proven fact. It will be interesting to watch this new phase emerge in the popular author's next romance.

Gustav Kiepenheuer, well known publisher of belles lettres, has issued an extraordinary advertisement, announcing in a mysterious, not to say eerie fashion, "Die Schriften des Vaters". Kiepenheuer seems to think that, "The Revolt of the Sons" in play and poem having had long innings, it is now time to try the opposing tack and announce the religious-mystic "Writings of the Father", divided into "The Series of Units" and "The Series of the Eternal Conflicts". In the "Units", "The Testament of the Father", "The Talks of the Father", and "The Speeches of the Father" are scheduled to appear this year. But the most extraordinary part of this highfalutin and somewhat tasteless advertisement is the stress laid upon the value of personal acquaintance with "the Father", who is to make his way "through the cities and countries" in order that his followers and enemies may meet him face to face. The fulfilment of his "Mission" is supposed to lie in this meeting. The whole announcement has a tone which leads the sober minded to suspect its sincerity. But the fact remains that it will be interesting to discover who has undertaken the parlous task of representing the Rabindranathish "Father" with his wonder philosophy, and whether the personal contact does not destroy the halo contrived of printer's ink.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge in Cooperation with the American Library Association

Without a single new title appearing in the list, and only such shifts of relative standing as to bring this index of the popular taste in literature into closer alignment with the general judgment of the critics, the April Monthly Score seems neither to call for nor to justify comment.

The reporter may therefore, perhaps, be pardoned if he take the space thus made available to emphasize once more the catholicity of this monthly survey of the circulation of library books. It is a cross section of the American mind, cutting straight through all of the section lines that separate class and class, whether one's classification of the human species be by the standard of wealth, the gauge of intellectual qualities, or the yardsticks of occupation, age, sex, race or creed. When one writes that the book borrowers from the public libraries are reading thus and so, or that their current choice in literature indicates such and such as to their average outlook upon life, the commentator is merely using a convenient symbol whereby to epitomize all mankind. For it may be set down as axiomatic that these are the true representatives of the whole reading public, these patrons of the public libraries; that the books upon which they set the seal of their approval are the books which those who, unfortunately, have not access to public libraries would read with avidity if they could get them; that they are the same books which the booksellers find moving most readily from their shelves. And while it might be added that they are also the sort of books which writers seeking big sales and their ensuing royalties would find it profitable to write (if possible), it is interesting to note how the list is always strongly leavened with the titles of books which obviously were written with no such mercenary object as their prime motive; books well and truly written by master craftsmen; books whose interpretation of life is as true and revealing as life itself.

We, as a people, are still seeking the answer to the age old question, "What is truth?"

—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	The Cathedral	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
2.	Black Oxen	*Gertrude Atherton*	BONI
3.	Babbitt	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
4.	Wanderer of the Wasteland	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
5.	The Dim Lantern	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
6.	This Freedom	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE
7.	The Enchanted April	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
8.	One of Ours	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
9.	Rough-Hewn	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
10.	The Breaking Point	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN

GENERAL

1.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
2.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
3.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS
4.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
5.	Up Stream	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	BONI
6.	The Outline of Science	*J. Arthur Thomson*	PUTNAM
7.	Self Mastery Through Conscious Autosuggestion	*Emile Coué*	AMER. LIBRARY SERV.
8.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
9.	The Story of Mankind	*Hendrik Van Loon*	BONI
10.	The Letters of Franklin K. Lane	*Lane and Wall*	HOUGHTON

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE BOOKMAN'S MAIL

To the Editor of The Bookman:

It is seldom I pick up gauntlets. It is seldom I see them. Not that my eyes are always in the clouds (as Mrs. Breuer hints the creative artist's should be*), but they are fixed, too persistently perhaps, either on an ever receding future when our tangled problems shall have been somewhat unraveled, or directed within. However, when my eye did light on this well worn gauntlet, something in its impertinent gesture forced me to accept its challenge, and, unused to tourneys and only lightly armored, I must enter the lists.

On first perusal there is some surety in Mrs. Breuer's conviction that almost persuades the reader to accept her point of view. But, after thinking on a condition that has puzzled and prodded all women artists, of this day at least, one is forced to believe that Mrs. Breuer has reached her conclusions too blithely and has not documented her thesis as thoroughly as she might. When she makes comparison between the man and the woman artist (to the latter's detriment, of course) she utterly fails to take into account one very important factor. That factor is time. It is so recently that women have gained any kind of freedom — financial, legal or social — that to make an analogy between their achievement and man's, without making every allowance for their enormous handicap in point of time alone, is to do them a vast injustice. The creative mind must have leisure. And even today, in spite of the comparatively great advancement in labor saving devices, the mass of women both here and abroad are chained to a routine of domesticity: a routine so rasping and insistent in its minor urgencies that it leaves little time for peaceful reflection — not to speak of creative excitement. Even when a woman need not do her own housework, private living is still time demanding, complex, wasteful and cumbersome.

I am not overlooking the fact that Mrs. Breuer makes her pronouncement against the very young ("the flapper") and not against the woman seasoned, and too often worn, by experience. And here I must make what may seem to be an intolerant digression. It is this: that the experimental work of the very young is given, in this hectic hour of *les Jeunes*, too serious consideration. Formerly a young writer had to serve his apprenticeship. If he were in college, his highest ambition was to have his work accepted by his college paper. Now, nothing less than a place in the leading magazines contents him, and there he sprouts, side by side with those writers who have weathered the storms and assaults of their literary springs, and who are firmly rooted and full of growth. This indiscriminate placing makes for a lack of standards and is unfair alike to the unctuous and untried and the persevering and proven. . . . However, to get back to Mrs. Breuer. Although her case is against the young woman in particular — Mrs. Breuer thinks she is not brave or serious or passionate about art or ideas — still her implications are wide and include women artists in general. Specializing on the young artist is a bit specious. For when, except in the case of the isolated genius, has the great work of artists been done by the very young? To consider the indictment against the woman artist seriously, we will have to allow her her maturity, just as one makes the same allowance for man.

I do not assent to Mrs. Breuer's condition that for a woman to be a successful artist she must cast into the discard that part of her life that is essentially womanly. Is that sacrifice demanded of or accepted by the man artist? Rather there must be a readjustment, not a denial. Woman must bring into her art just those qualities that distinguish her as a woman: her intuition, her insight, her adaptability, her feminine ardor and her dream. Her dream, yes Mrs. Breuer, that has stung to creation and preserved for art the men of her race. It is true it is hard for a woman to be an artist. For every obstacle that a man overcomes she must overcome three. And so her triumph is the greater.

As foil for Scott Fitzgerald, who is Mrs. Breuer's bright, particular star, let me hold up Thyra Samter Winslow, whose objective and economical portraits are just as penetrating and possibly more universal than the timely and talented sketches of the author of "Tales of the Jazz Age". As worthy confrères of any contemporary critic let me suggest Rebecca West, whose pen is always touched with poetry, Mary Colum with her well digested knowledge, her defined standards and clear exposition, Frances Newman with her erudition and rich allusive style. Does Mrs. Breuer know any

The Flapper's Wild Oats by Elizabeth Breuer (The Bookman, March, 1923).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

man more experimental in words than Gertrude Stein or one whose cerebrations are more acidly ironic than those of Marianne Moore? Does she not recall Dorothy Richardson, whose aims and style rank with that same kind of experimentation that makes James Joyce one of the most discussed of present day novelists? When she says that women write free verse but "lacking the acid vitality of the creator", has she ever scanned the sharp images of "H. D." or the colorful, exciting pictures of Amy Lowell? Among the experimentors has she overlooked the harassed, nervous stanzas of Anna Wickham, which reflect, if any verses can, the itching irritability that besets the woman artist of today?

The protagonist of man says that men absorb different things in college than women do. In this limited time I have tried to investigate and compare the curricula of both. My findings are that, with the exception of the elective courses, the classical requirements are the same. Of course, it is a matter of luck whether one sits under an inspired teacher on fire with his subject, or a tired professor droopingly going through his routine of prescribed lectures. But that, I fancy, is an equal chance for both sexes.

Mrs. Breuer bewails the dearth of groups of young women who foregather, passionately to discuss the content and form of art. I cannot refute her by listing the addresses where such groups hold forth. But I can assure her that in mixed groups of men and women, where I have been privileged to join, the women have been equally as interested and enthusiastic as the men, and, in fact, no man of my acquaintance can hold forth so long, so valiantly, so compellingly as Miss Lowell. However, I think the value of the group as a spur to artistic creation only negligible. I hold, with many others, that the greatest work has been conceived and brought forth in loneliness. There is a confusion in the thinking of anyone who confounds artistic creativeness with technical discussion.

I believe women have, can, and will rise to the same heights of artistic creativeness as men, but they will have to raise themselves by their own bootstraps. Man will not make the way easy for woman as woman has done for man since the beginning of time. Woman will herself have to evolve a system of living, in which, without sacrificing the race or the family, she will be able to have peace and privacy. Perhaps as women win into the ranks of scientific research something will be found to liberate woman in her sex life (since the sexual instinct is so bound up with the creative impulse), so that she may function in that part of her nature with the same lack of responsibility and easy liberation as man.

"A soul", writes Mrs. Breuer, "is a bitter luxury. Are we young women prepared to pay for one with love, family, with our social well being if need be?" I confess this section flabbergasts me. Art is no doubt a partial expression of that nebulous quantity we call "soul", but is it synonymous? Isn't it possible for the frailest imagination to visualize limitless possibilities of women anæsthetic to or sacrificial of art, who still might be said to possess that now no longer tabooed quality, "soul"?

I think in her laudable zeal, Mrs. Breuer has fallen into a pitfall. She has, in her imagination, grafted on to the lonely and laconic creator, the hospitable discursiveness of the dilettante. She has identified and confused two widely different functions — conversation and creation.

JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER.

MY DEAR MR. FARRAR:

In the May BOOKMAN, which you sent me several days ago, Mr. Floyd Dell, under pretense of confessing a critical "cruelty", makes a thinly veiled and personal attack on my work — and me. He modestly tells how on one occasion he not only put Mr. Gilbert Murray in his place for praising that work, and how he and his "gang" have so boldly "squashed" my "hopes of immortality" with the "younger generation", but adds the artistic fiction of having, in 1909, put me out of commission for two weeks by having terrifically and completely damned my poetry in a two column review.

Now I fancy that the younger generation do not accept final verdicts quite so gullibly. In any case they may be left to answer for themselves. And I hardly think Mr. Murray will grieve overmuch at Mr. Dell's overthrowing of his judgment. As for myself I may say that since Mr. Dell's attempts at slaughter I have managed to stay out of bed long enough to write a dozen or more books — each of which has elicited the English and American praise which so excites Mr. Dell's venom. In fact "oblivion's uncatalogued library" doesn't seem yet to have quite swallowed me, and some seem to think that my name is not wholly unknown even in his — and my — own country.

The animosity of Mr. Dell is wholly personal. When a young man he sent me some of his verses for criticism and my kindly efforts to help him were inadequate to the demands of his vanity. From that time to the present he has lost no opportunity to vent his resentment: whence his bad conscience. It is sufficient, therefore, to call attention to the fact that later on in his article he quite discredits himself by asserting that "all criticism is motivated by jeal-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ousy or envy" — a doctrine which will hardly ingratiate him with the honest-minded anywhere, but which he unquestionably follows.

As you, my dear Mr. Farrar, have opened your pages to this malicious attack, I ask a similar courtesy for this response. Lies are not easily scotched, but it is at least worth while to display this instance of the woeful lack of integrity in much American criticism.

Yours very truly,
CALE YOUNG RICE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BOOKMAN:

I shall appreciate an opportunity to comment upon and correct certain erroneous statements relative to the Christian Science religion contained in an article, entitled "The Literature of Quackery", by Robert T. Morris, appearing in your January issue. The fact that your contributor attempts to confuse the practice of Christian Science with suggestive therapeutics would indicate that he has failed completely to grasp the fundamentals of the former and knows little or nothing as to the practical workings of the latter.

All suggestive methods of healing, as an example, are based upon the theory of minds many and rely entirely upon the supposed power of the human will to produce the healing results; whereas Christian Science teaches that there is but one Mind, infinite and divine, even that "Mind which", as the Apostle Paul tells us, "was also in Christ Jesus." Christian Science, furthermore, holds that it is the purifying and corrective power of this Mind, and not corporeal will, which operates in human consciousness to destroy false, material beliefs and heal disease. In this connection Mrs. Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, has stated on page 144 of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures", "Human will-power is not Science. Human will belongs to the so-called material senses, and its use is to be condemned. Willing the sick to recover is not the metaphysical practice of Christian Science."

In drawing a distinction between suggestive and material modes of healing and the purely spiritual system practiced by Christ Jesus and accepted in its entirety by Christian Science it is necessary to bear in mind that, according to the former, matter, with its various diseases, is regarded as a reality; while the latter recognizes all material conditions as unreal phases of human experience, having no part in the real universe of God's creation. This, I may add, is in strict accord with the Master's statement, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Adherents of Christian Science, accepting the precepts and practices of Christ Jesus as their guide, are today reproducing his divine philosophy, healing the sick and reforming the sinful by spiritual means only. In view of which it seems somewhat inconsistent for professed adherents of the Christian faith to designate as quackery the literature descriptive of this system of Christian healing. Jesus, it will be recalled, definitely commanded his followers to heal the sick as well as preach the Gospel, and invariably cited his healing works as proof of his divine authority. In spite of the fact, however, a certain type of religionist, failing to comprehend or refusing to obey the Master's command in respect to spiritual healing, persistently depreciates its practice by Christian Scientists and loudly condemns them for including it as a part of their Christian ministry. Whatever may be one's individual views concerning this system of metaphysics, it has served to build up a mighty religious organization which could hardly have been reared on the false foundations indicated by our critic. Christian Scientists, I am sure, may be excused for holding that the criterion established by Christ Jesus when he said, "By their fruits ye shall know them", is no less pertinent now than in the days of the gentle Nazarene; therefore they very properly point to the results of their healing ministry as evidence of its Christian character, and practical value to mankind.

Sincerely yours,
CHARLES E. HEITMAN,
Christian Science Committee on Publication.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

THE BOOKMAN presents the eighth instalment of its series of literary club programs. Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to evolve for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see THE BOOKMAN for October, November, December, January); II. Contemporary American Poetry; III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.

The BOOKMAN programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Hon. Maurice Francis Egan, diplomat and literary critic; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The editor of THE BOOKMAN and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any questions confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "THE BOOKMAN'S Literary Club Service".

THE group of poets presented this month forms the fourth part of a study program of present day poetry. The committee have tried, in mapping out this program, both to show the varying trends of modern American poetry and to combine these differing elements into some sort of ordered pattern which might be easily followed. For this reason, the poets whose work is to be considered have been divided into groups. ("The New England Group", consisting of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, and Amy Lowell, may be found in the March number. "The Middle Western Group", including Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, and Edgar Lee Masters, appeared in April. And in May Anna Hempstead Branch, Sara Teasdale, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Grace Hazard Conkling formed the first half of the group of "Lyric Poets".) Of course, the same poet may belong to two or three groups. In such a case, the determining factor has been his most pronounced work.

The program is intended for a season's study. Yet in order not to make it too long, it has been considered wise to include only those poets already well known to the public. The committee wish it clearly understood that, in choosing these poets, every decision was made by ballot, the majority ruling.

The names of easily procurable books and magazine articles dealing with individual authors are listed after the account of the poet to whom they refer. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

Anthologies

The New Poetry. Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson. MACMILLAN.

Modern American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.

A Miscellany of American Poetry, 1919. HARCOURT, BRACE.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American Poetry, 1922. HARCOURT, BRACE.

References and Guides

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.
An Introduction to Poetry. Hubbell and Beaty. MACMILLAN.

Poetry in General

Convention and Revolt in Poetry. John Livingston Lowes. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
A Study of Poetry. Bliss Perry. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The Principles of English Versification. Paull F. Baum. HARVARD.
Lyric Forms from France. Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.
The American Rhythm. Mary Austin. HARCOURT, BRACE.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

Committee: Amy Lowell, chairman; Grace Hazard Conkling, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Sara Teasdale, Louis Untermeyer.

Lyric Poets

(*Second Half: Men*)

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The appreciation of poetry is a most personal matter. The following program represents the painstaking effort of the above group of distinguished poets and critics. It includes only names of living Americans, and most of the younger poets were omitted as not having yet won their spurs. When this program was submitted for approval to the executive committee, suggestions and emendations were many. In few cases did the comments of any one member of the executive committee agree with those of another. For this reason, we have decided to publish the program as originally outlined by the poetry committee, without change. The biographies and quotations from critical material have been added by the editors of* THE BOOKMAN, *and for these the poetry committee is not responsible.*

LOUIS UNTERMEYER

Challenge. CENTURY.
These Times. HOLT.
Roast Leviathan. HARCOURT, BRACE.

With a strong critical faculty, a passion for democracy, and a lyric sense, Louis Untermeyer is a poet of distinction and a critic of power. His love songs are impassioned and often beautiful. His dramatic lyrics, particularly those in his latest volume, are sparse, moving, and powerful. In them he has become a sort of Robert Frost seeping through the rhythms of the Old Testament. A lover of poetry, above all else, and determinedly interested in propaganda for its sake in America.

Louis Untermeyer is distinctly positive, brilliant in his speech, tentative in his manner. He is a warm friend and a fair critic. He has often sacrificed his own work for the furtherance of others. His home is a gathering place for writers and musicians. His influence, like that of Amy Lowell, has been strong in spreading an interest in poetry and poets of the "New Era". Unlike many poets, he has a family and is happy in that family. He is a native of New York City, born there in 1885. His instincts have always been artistic — in fact, he studied to be a musician; but he compromised finally by entering his father's jewelry manufacturing establishment. In this business, from which he recently retired, he has shown the same tolerant understanding of social problems that is manifest in his poetry. His democratic factory experiments are said to have been eminently successful.

Strongly race-conscious, he yet has a broad understanding of the psychological problems of the Jew. His control of the poetical medium is growing. Breaking away from French and German influences,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his latest volume seems his most individual. He is conspicuously a strong and vital influence in American letters.

"Louis Untermeyer is another poet who has spoken bravely against the oppression of the poor. If it were not for the fact that Mr. Untermeyer uses regularly stressed rhythms and occasional rhymes, and is a maker of fine symmetrical patterns in poetry, one might almost classify him with the humanitarian radicals. For his thought is radical enough, and humanitarian enough. But he is never the orator, when he writes verse, always the poet, even in his most impassioned protests against what he conceives to be injustice. In one of his short poems he identifies himself spiritually, and for the purposes of the poem, with the miners about whom he is writing. In this way, by dramatizing his emotions and putting himself in the other man's place, he succeeds in giving us a subjective lyric through which the soul of the miner speaks:

'God, we don't like to complain —
We know that the mine is no lark —
But — there's the pools from the rain;
But — there's the cold and the dark.'

'Caliban in the Coal Mines' is memorable." — *Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

REFERENCES:

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

An Introduction to Poetry. Hubbell and Beaty. MACMILLAN.

A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

The Poetry of Louis Untermeyer. H. H. Peekham. SOUTH ATLANTIC QUARTERLY, January, 1918.

The Literary Spotlight. Anonymous. BOOKMAN, October, 1921.

The Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century. William Lyon Phelps. BOOKMAN, May, 1918.

WITTER BYNNER

Grenstone Poems. STOKES.

Fancy and imagination combined with delicate imagery characterize Bynner as a lyricist. He seldom strikes a strong note; but he often rises to heights of fantasy.

Dark, tall, soft in his movements, graceful, he has an easy presence and an effective voice. If it were not for his real poetic gift he might become a dilettante, so many are his hobbies. He collects Chinese prints and jades. He is interested in the theatre. He was at one time president of the Poetry Society of America. He now lives in the growing colony of American artist, poets, and musicians at Santa Fe in the Indian country of New Mexico. Witter Bynner was born in Brooklyn in 1881, was graduated from Harvard, and started his literary life as an editor. Collaborating with Arthur Davison Ficke, he fooled the public with the free verse hoax, "Spectra", and later followed it with "Pins for Wings". He has published volumes of poems and plays, an excellent translation of "Iphigenia in Tauris", and has been at work for some years on translations from the Chinese poets. A *tactful and graceful gentleman*, his verse is always tactful and graceful.

"There are occasions, and not a few of them, when Bynner tosses off a natural and skilfully modulated song with artless fluency. Frequently he reaches the high notes of poetry without effort or gasping for breath. And though there are instances where the spirit of 'The Shropshire Lad' overpowers this poet, he has a spirit of his own and many melodies to express it." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"Imagination at a white heat at his best, —fancy, never drooping low, at his second best. Worth careful study." — *Maurice Francis Egan.*

REFERENCE:

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

The Black Panther. SCRIBNER.

A lyrist of somewhat classic tendencies, he has acquired the use of Keatsian imagery that makes his poems, while contemplative, occasionally very beautiful. Yet there is a note of passion and a zest for sturdy living that adds magic to his quieter measures.

John Hall Wheelock is tall, dark, brooding, a quiet man in whatever mood you may encounter him. He was the class poet of Harvard the year he was graduated. Later, he studied at various German and Austrian universities. He is now on the staff of one of the large New York publishing houses. Born on Long Island, with his education distinctly academic, it is not to be wondered that his passions are for beauty and for form, that his verse savors of the aristocratic.

"It is this sense of intimacy and awe that transmutes his glimpses of reality; more than a few times the note struck is as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dominant as Henley's. Wheelock has something of the vision which uplifts sensuality and enough of the realist's passion to save mysticism from itself by humanizing it. Sometimes his unfettered exultations overleap themselves and the poem becomes a welter of uneven lines and inchoate music; frequently his rhapsodic eagerness extends his verses into rhetoric and verbosity. In an effort to invest old phrases with new glamor and hoping to emphasize his attitude, he overuses such striking connotations as 'dear, ridiculous' 'tawdry, pathetic', 'sane and sensual' (a special favorite of Wheelock's). He is even so intent on his song that he uses, again and again, such outworn poetic platitudes as 'fierce and flaming suns', 'luminous heavens', 'the boundless blue', 'radiant loveliness', 'vague alarms' and others of a similar, worn-down rubber stamp. But, even at its worst, 'The Human Fantasy' is an amazing first book; at its best, it is clear and distinctive, reflecting that high realism which is the color of life." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

REFERENCE:
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.

WILLIAM ROSE BENET

Merchants of Cathay. CENTURY.
Moons of Grandeur. DORAN.

Ballads, swaying, colored, filled with exotic wording and quaint imagery, characterize much of the work of this somewhat eighteenth century-nineteenth century poet. His lyrics often depart from rhetorical splendor, and display deep wisdom and quiet beauty. At his best a genuine poet, he is always an exceedingly able technician.

William Rose Benét is tall, slender, slightly pale, with quick eyes and a droll wit. He is poet, editor, essayist, and novelist. He was graduated, curiously enough, from the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University, but has never used this training in his life work. He is a dreamer of rich dreams, a poet of circumstance rather than mood. It is likely that many of his splendid ballads will be known long after the work of many other poets writing more in the prevailing fashion is forgotten.

"This vigor of utterance permeates most of Benét's work; it spurs his pen even when he is not engaged in the making of ballads. It surges beneath such quieter poems as 'Paternity', the ironical and intricately rhymed 'Remarks to the Back of a Pew'; the freshness of 'His Ally', the tender strength of 'Charms' and the fantastic 'Morgiana Dances' in which swift movement is cleverly achieved. It makes us condone the instances where his borrowing is so unabashed. His love for Keats and Browning is so intense that occasionally he cannot refrain from imitating them — even when he is conscious of it. But in the succeeding volume there is proportionately less of this assumption of other men's accents and far more of the poet's own personality." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"His best poems have always a certain narrative interest and seem like stories of spiritual adventure. He carries us into far countries of the imagination to see strange sights and hear wild, engaging talk. He has a genius for the making of ballads and his poem, 'The Horse Thief', half realism and half flamboyant fancy, is one of the finest of the kind in recent literature." — *Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

REFERENCES:
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.
The Poetry of Benét. DIAL, January 16, 1914.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GOSSIP SHOP

THE exodus from the trials and tribulations of town has already commenced. All flock to one or another corner of Europe. We don't like to complain; but, added to the fact that we are finding it necessary to stick by our desk this season, we are woefully aware that a steam drill has commenced its gargantuan clamor just outside the window and that a new building is about to be erected. Alas! Edwin Arlington Robinson sailed not long ago for England, likewise Kate Douglas Wiggin, likewise Maxwell Aley of "The Woman's Home Companion". Leonora Speyer, with her anthology of American poetry for the Germans complete, is taking a two weeks' vacation in Italy. George Jean Nathan, the strenuous critic of "The Smart Set", is going over to see a few plays on the continent; and Stephen Vincent Benét, who finds living in Paris far simpler than in New York City, plans to go there soon. To make up for these departures from our shores, Europe sends us of her best. Joseph Conrad arrives, and is properly hailed, as should be. Also Max Reinhardt, to be seen here and there at the theatre, planning to turn Madison Square Garden into some sort of great playhouse for several of his spectacles. So ideas flow on across the oceans, and we have just been interrupted by a subpœna calling us to jury duty. Job, Job, where art thou to comfort us?

At last, "Brother Savage" tells us, there are signs that the persistent invitations to Anatole France to visit England are to bear fruit. We are able to state that he has promised a group of authors, with John Galsworthy at the head, that if his health permits he will make the journey across the Channel during this year. The only occasion heretofore on which the great French satirist came over was ten years ago, and in the interval a new generation of writers has sprung up. Contrary to their general habit of looking superciliously upon any author over forty, they have outdone their elders in enthusiastic regard for M. France, and their admiration appears to have been increased by the striking way in which, at his ripe age, he has widened his literary activities. Not only has he issued four delectable volumes of autobiography — "La Vie en Fleur", the latest, is undergoing translation for John Lane's Bodley Head series, which already includes English versions of the others — but he has just completed an arduous task in Paris as an operatic librettist. Anatole France is remembered in England as a spare, skull capped figure, a sort of later day Don Quixote. While in London he allowed himself to be taken to one or two Mayfair drawing rooms, and in the few instances when he spoke after dinner his contributions were charming. Nor did he forget to express definite views on English literature. He thought that the English neglected their best story tellers, especially Dickens, though that, we think, is no longer true; except where individual taste lies in the direction of Dickens's antithesis, the author of "Vanity Fair". "Dickens", said M. France, "had more feeling

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than any other writer, and I regard 'David Copperfield' as a new gospel." This, it will be recalled, was Tolstoy's opinion also. Doubtless the Dickens Fellowship, that thrives so remarkably in England even fifty-three years after Dickens's death, will have a share in the welcome of M. Bergeret, or M. Sylvestre Bonnard, embodied in actual life.

The following James Whitcomb Riley anecdote comes to us from Nellie L. Claybaugh of Frankfort, Indiana. It certainly makes a good story.

An amusing literary hoax is that perpetrated by the editors of the Kokomo (Indiana) "Dispatch", a newspaper that has flourished for fifty years. It was during the summer of 1877 that the young editors, Oscar and J. Howard Henderson, put it over.

At that time, James Whitcomb Riley was working on a newspaper in the neighboring town of Anderson. He was a cub reporter and was receiving eight dollars a week for chasing elusive news items. He had just retired from his now famous tour of sign painting through the middle west and was uncouth in manner and inexperienced in the newspaper game.

In looking over the exchanges, the editors Henderson, alert and zealous for every worth while scrap, had often remarked unsigned verses in the Anderson paper. They liked them but they had never used them. Finally "Craqueodoom", a unique thing, came along and they reprinted it with a complimentary note. To a struggling poet, unheralded and unsung, this note was exhilarating indeed. He wrote the Hendersons and acknowledged his brain child. The Hendersons replied and a correspondence developed.

Riley long had had an idea. He felt that if he could get before the critics they might judge him favorably. He asked the Hendersons to help him and they agreed.

One day, from out the obscure office of the Anderson newspaper, went an envelope carrying a poem, "Leonainie", now nationally famous as an art gem. The envelope reached the "Dispatch" office and its contents shortly appeared in print.

Explanatory of "Leonainie" was a story by the managing editor to the effect that the poem had been found written on the fly leaf of an antiquated Latin-English dictionary which a man in Kokomo possessed. It was said that the man came from Chesterfield, Virginia, a village near Richmond. He had the book, so the claim was made, from his grandparents, who had kept an inn in Chesterfield.

The explanatory paragraph carefully related the circumstance (so called) under which "Leonainie" came to be written in the dictionary. The story went that one night a young man, rather dissipated as to aspect, called at the inn door and asked for a night's lodging. He was shown to a room. In the morning he had vanished but the book with the verses remained.

To further the inference, a description of the handwriting was given. This was said to be of Roman script, entirely legible but faint. The signed initials, "E. A. P.", furnished well nigh conclusive evidence of the desired impression — that of Edgar Allan Poe as the author.

The issue in which "Leonainie" was printed was at once broadcasted to magazines and newspapers over the country. Before any returns were in, the "Dispatch" office received a visitor. He was a shy young man, sandy as to complexion and indefinite as to hair. He made himself known as the author of "Leonainie".

Within a few weeks the verdict of the men of letters was known. The consensus of opinion was that the verses were the work of a genius. Many forthwith ascribed them to Poe. W. F. Gill, who was writing a biography of the Virginia man, asked for a copy of the poem to be used in his forthcoming volume. An old sweetheart wrote from California, asking for the original that she might compare the writing with letters which she had, written by Poe.

Then came the exposé written in the "Dispatch". It was announced that J. W. Riley, an obscure local editor of a county newspaper, was the author. It was startling to the young man that he should have caused such a sensation. It was foreign to his nature to desire such a spectacular entrance into the literary world — the truth is, he hardly expected it.

Shakespeare's birthday has passed again, and with fitting celebrations. Lady's Day at the Players Club this year was graced by the presence of the Norrises (Kathleen, Charles, and Frank Norris's young daughter), by the Irwins (Will and Inez Haynes), by Fannie Hurst, by Mrs. F. P. A., and by many, many actors and other mor-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tals who paid the customary pilgrimage to Edwin Booth's study. In the evening we attended the opening of "As You Like It", the first production of the American National Theatre, as planned and financed by the Producing Managers' Association. It was an occasion of much beauty, both in the audience and on the stage — and little else. We saw Ridgely Torrence for the first time in many months, and wondered when his new volume of poetry was to appear. We saw Frank Crowninshield and Henry Sell, those fashion plate editors. A lady sat next us who, turning toward us slightly and raising her monocle, remarked, "I presume there are many of those journalists in the audience this evening", to which we could only reply by an impolite grunt. Here was John Drew with a goodly company in a box. Marc Connelly, about to start rehearsals for a musical comedy, "Helen of Troy, N. Y.", hovered in the background. William A. Brady, Jr., now a fullfledged member of the Producing Managers' Association, about to make a production of his own, did not show too deeply such new responsibilities. George Jean Nathan and Heywood Broun came unattended, while Percy Hammond sat alongside the always brilliant Laurette Taylor. Fannie Hurst and her husband were not far away. All of this seems irrelevant when one considers how exceedingly lovely both Marjorie Rambeau and Margalo Gillmore appeared, as Rosalind and Celia respectively, in the costumes which Lee Simonson had designed for them. The bard himself, we feel sure, would have recognized their undoubted pulchritude.

In most gentlemen who write for a living, or even in those who only write, there is a distinguishable roving tendency. Sometimes this is indulged. Sometimes it is repressed. With Christopher Morley and a group of his friends this tendency has al-

Christopher Morley

ways been expressed by a passionate fondness for things maritime. One need only follow the "Bowling Green" column of the New York "Evening Post" to know that. This spring, Mr. Morley tells us, he has been spending most of his time writing poetry, and planning a unique enterprise. Together with other friends of that noble organization known as "The Three Hours for Lunch Club" he has purchased a squarerigged four masted schooner! This schooner's name is now "Sophy"; but when she arrives in New York harbor after a voyage up the coast, she will be rendered shipshape and most of literary New York will take part in a gorgeous birthday, or rather rechristening, party, when she will be named "Tusitala". She will be used for various literary and semiliterary activities. Gentlemen and ladies desiring to travel as in the old sailing days will

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have an opportunity to indulge in brief cruises. Authors needing atmosphere of the local island type will be given a chance to find it under most favorable circumstances. Although this sounds like one of Mr. Morley's own delightful fantasies — not so! not so! It's all perfectly true. There will probably be a figurehead of R. L. S. The cabins will be named for great sea books, i. e. the "Moby Dick" cabin, "Two Years Before the Mast" cabin. Atmosphere! Atmosphere! Bring on the camera.

Various diminutive poetry magazines, with their covers of gay hue, come and go. The writing of verse is still apparently the pastime of America's masses. The poetry in the March magazines, however, seemed to us exceptionally good. There was "Song of Night" by the Italian-American Pascal D'Angelo in "The Century"; a stately measure by the philosopher Santayana in the same magazine, called "A Minuet on Reaching the Age of Fifty"; "The Last Word" by James Stephens in "The Dial"; "The Gestures You Make" by Marion Strobel in "Poetry"; "Nuit Blanche" by Amy Lowell in "The Double Dealer"; "Two Poems" by Robert J. Roe also in "The Double Dealer"; and in "The New Republic" "Words for Weeping" by Hazel Hall and "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost.

On the first of May, Houghton Mifflin Company moved from Number 4 Park Street, Boston, to Number 2, and into the ground floor and basement of the building moved the Old Corner Book Store. We quote from a booklet, "Park Street New and Old", just issued by Houghton Mifflin. Of course, we shall miss those quaint old offices, with their circular stairs; but, after all, they will be only two doors away.

This move is of special interest as a reunion after a separation of more than half a century; for from 1828 until 1865, the direct predecessors of the Old Corner Book Store and of Houghton Mifflin Company occupied together the historic building at the corner of School and Washington Streets. Their coming together again on Park Street is a notable event in the history of that short, but distinguished acclivity.

There is, perhaps, no other single block in Boston more intimately associated with forces that have made for intellectual leadership than the hundred yards that run from Brimstone Corner to the Shaw Monument. From Park Street Church at the corner, described by Henry James as "perfectly felicitous", one passes Number 1, the site of the old mansion of the Wigglesworths, leaders alike in Puritan theology and the Calcutta trade; and Number 2, occupied for three quarters of a century by Dr. John C. Warren and his son, Dr. Jonathan Mason Warren, to whom Boston medicine owes much. By a queer coincidence, it was at Number 2, after the erection of the present building in 1878, that the Christian Science faith had its inception. Number 3, long the hospitable residence of Thomas Ward, American agent of Baring's, Number 4, the home of Josiah Quincy the younger, and Number 5, that of Josiah Quincy the elder, are alike rich in historical association. Then comes the Union Club, founded in 1863 "for the encouragement of patriotic sentiment and opinion", and finally, at the top, facing Bulfinch's masterpiece, the Amory-Ticknor house, where for half a century George Ticknor, historian of Spanish literature, and correspondent of kings and queens, was arbiter of taste for literary America. The houses that look from their front windows upon this unique thoroughfare and Boston Common beyond, regard from the rear the Old Granary Burying Ground, where lie the bones of the parents of Benjamin Franklin; John Hancock and Samuel Adams, Elizabeth Vergoose, the author of the poems that bear the latter part of her name, and her publisher, Thomas Fleet. The officers and directors of Houghton Mifflin Company and the Old Corner Book Store are not unmindful of the standards of taste and the obligation to public service that the spirit of Old Park Street imposes.

Not long ago we met Edgar Lee Masters in New York. He has mellowed since we saw him last, and seems far more cheerful than one of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his favorite Spoon River epitaphs. In fact, Mr. Masters was in merry mood. He quoted bits from Byron. He wrote little poems at table. He told us of encounters with characters of the underworld in whom he seemed much interested. He has written several hundred more Spoon River verses, which obviously means a new "Spoon River Anthology". He will not hurry to publish them, he says, but will work hard, polishing here and there, in order to be sure that the gravestones are in proper condition before being set up. Those who have heard these poems say that they are far superior to the earlier group. This would seem a difficult feat for Mr. Masters to have accomplished. After an evening of discussion of Byron, crime, and bathing, we walked up Fifth Avenue and Mr. Masters told us of plans for a new novel to follow "Skeeters Kirby". As we said good night to him, we realized that he has grown stockier. Somehow those square broad shoulders look even squarer and broader than was their wont. Mr. Masters, we understand, is again to be found in his Chicago haunts after several years of suburban living.

Two New York papers have criticized the editor of THE BOOKMAN because his list of plays worth seeing in the May issue did not include Rachel Crothers's "Mary the Third". We support him in this. True, her play is a provocative study of the younger generation vs. the older. It is capably acted. It has amused and pleased many persons. To us, however, it seemed more like abstract ideas, clothed in the garments of social beings, thrusting themselves at you across the footlights. These ideas we did not believe. The play was disillusioning without being definite enough actually to put across its propaganda. The night we saw this society drama we sat behind a well known lady who has been divorced once, is about to divorce again, and is said then to be about to marry a third. Our attention, we admit, was partly drawn to her facial attitudes as she watched so biting a story of marital difficulty. Perhaps the fact that she remained perfectly poised and laughed at just the right places influenced our judgment of the play.

A small paper bound book by J. George Frederick called "Adventuring in New York" dropped on our desk this morning and cheered us up a bit. Here are lists of cafés, of bookshops, tales of how to spend an evening in Greenwich Village, instructions as to how to "prowl by night". We shall never forget one night when we had determined not to sleep at all but to enjoy as many phases of New York life as we could until dawn. There were hours in Riverside Park, we remember, lunches in Harlem cabarets, a dance at a Rumanian wedding, dawn on Brooklyn Bridge, a run in with the police, early mass at a downtown church. What a night! Nice to remember; but we don't recommend it. One paragraph, we must quote from this little book. It's important, if true. What think you?

> Women are beautiful in other cities, but in New York women have the kaleidoscopic beauty of many races, both pure and mixed; New York is a gallery of every variety of womanly beauty. In New York women have also the superb advantage, from factory girl to society woman, of being able to dress well at almost any price they may be able to afford, with the result that the Avenue is a continuous stream of well-dressed women with little of the sharp contrast in manner and clothes between the working girl and the well-to-do woman.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many stenographers and shop girls look more chic than the woman of means. In New York, as in Paris, they can and do absorb style and demeanor out of the very atmosphere of the city. In consequence, woman in New York is a shining spectacle, socially, mentally and personally; the most fascinating part of the human scene, for here as nowhere else are in view in a proper setting, the many facets of the American woman's preeminence.

What a variety of writers we have met this month! Owen Davis, at the circus with Bob Davis, the editor of "Munsey's". We should like to hazard a guess that Mr. Davis's "Icebound" will be the Pulitzer Prize play for this year. It might well be. Then, there was Charles Hanson Towne, who has several books hot from the presses this season, and who tells us that he is now associated with the American Play Company. He was most effective in burlesque German opera, ably assisted by Peggy Wood, who sang guttural wood notes with drooping charm. Robert Nathan, whose "Autumn" has always seemed to us one of the best novels from our younger writers, came into the Shop the other day. He is busy on another novel which will be finished and published shortly. This winter he has been much interested in an organization known as "The Poets". This group has made its own a room on Washington Square, where tea is served, and occasionally dinner. Supposedly a group of only those who actually write poetry, its attempt is to be informal and to serve as an antidote for the solemn pomposity of the Poetry Society of America. Just how far it has been successful, we do not know. We still have a feeling that poets never were created for organizations. At last, after years of waiting, we have met Edna St. Vincent Millay. She rushed in while we were having tea with a lady who lives near Washington Square. A shy, delicate, birdlike person is Miss Millay. She had bone rim spectacles in one hand, and a frown on her forehead. She assured us that she was working very hard. Her novel, so garishly announced, to have been named "Hardigut", has been withdrawn by her, and she is now writing more poetry and attempting to keep away as much as possible from the great gaiety of the closing New York season. She will probably spend a part of the summer, at least, in a cottage at Croton-on-Hudson near Floyd Dell and his family. Kenneth Brown and his wife Demetra Vaka, we met at lunch. He is a droll, quiet person, who likes to play handball with prizefighters and writes humorously of the great game of golf in his book "Putter Perkins". She is busily interesting herself now in the political problem of the Near East. John Curtis Underwood, the poet, imposing enough in a light grey golf suit, came to tell us of plans for a new publishing venture in the great bohemian southwest, i. e., New Mexico. He feels that New York has long enough been the publishing centre of these United States. He's probably right. We shall watch for developments. What pleasanter place to publish books than in the Taos district? Mary Roberts Rinehart, her son Alan tells us, has just finished "The Breaking Point" as a play. It will go into rehearsal, in all probability, before many weeks. Mrs. Rinehart finished one play before "The Breaking Point" and, deciding that it was not timely, put it away wherever Mrs. Rinehart puts such things. Top bureau drawer?

Down at Hastings, an old English fishing village on the south coast, we noticed a tiny lady with a basket enter a confectioner's shop and purchase some cakes, obviously for afternoon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tea. Having met her in London earlier in the year, we recognized without difficulty who she was, and we were not surprised to see her cross the road as she emerged and make a call at a plumber's, probably about the gas. Then, on her way home to St. Leonard's, an adjacent suburb, she visited a circulating library. While selecting a volume from the shelves she heard another visitor say to the librarian, "Yes, it's a threepence-a-day book, but Sheila Kaye-Smith is worth that." Her face did not show any sign that she heard the exclamation, and it was only after she had left the library that the speaker learned her compliment had been paid in the presence of Miss Kaye-Smith herself. It was a characteristic morning for this popular novelist, who prefers to pursue her simple, homely existence down at Hastings instead of in London, where she finds it impossible to write. The success of "The End of the House of Allard", her latest work, promises to overtop that of any of her previous novels. The origin of the uncommon surname, by the way, is explained by the fact that "Kaye" (her father's mother's name) was tacked on to "Smith" to distinguish the family from the Smiths who actually lived next door!

Clayton Hamilton says that the motion pictures are simply a form for the primitive telling of stories. That seems to us a wise statement. Homer's epic, too, was a form for the primitive telling of stories. As an artistic medium becomes more complex, the more likely are its effects to fade quickly into oblivion. Rupert Hughes is one of the few authors who not only has made a success of the motion pictures, but has and still is enjoying his contact with them. He came to town from Hollywood just as his latest picture "Souls for Sale" was being shown for the first time at the Capitol. As gay as ever, as quick in his movements, as brilliant in arranging his always provocative sentences, he told us anecdotes of the production of his picture. We were informed by a patronizing friend of Mr. Hughes that, after all, to one who

Rupert Hughes

knew the motion pictures, the Hollywood atmosphere of "Souls for Sale" was absurdly usual! Quite so, probably. But what excellent journalism it is that makes all of us who don't know Hollywood interested in just that atmosphere. Mr. Hughes is never too busy writing and directing films to take care of his usual output of novels. The new book will be called "Within These Walls". Mr. Hughes was much impressed by the feat of engineering which made New York's water system possible, by the foresight of the men who planned it. With this as background he has told what, apparently, is the story of a family's fight to maintain the appearance of respectability through several generations. This strikes us as an interesting theme. Also, it sounds like a good

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moving picture; and Mr. Hughes, by now well ensconced again in Hollywood, has already started his plans for producing it. It seems worthy of note that when the young lady who sketched Mr. Hughes for THE BOOKMAN showed him the result, here reproduced, his remark was: "Well, you've been kinder to my face than God was!"

California writers are always dining or having a gay time of one sort or another, according to Laura B. Everett who sends us the following gossip. Incidentally, we hear that the hundred dollar prize offered by the Forest Theatre of Carmel, California, for a play suitable for its outdoor stage, has been awarded to Helen Coale Crew (Mrs. Henry Crew) of Evanston, Illinois, for "The Cradle", a poetic drama of thirteenth century Italy, dealing with St. Francis and the Children's Crusade. The play will be produced in July, 1923.

At one of the 1923 dinners of the California Writers' Club, there were gathered together nearly a dozen of those who knew and revered the poet, Edward Rowland Sill. Most of them were students in the Oakland High School and afterward at the State University at Berkeley. One of them, Martha Sherman Day Stringham, the widow of Professor Irving Stringham, the mathematician, as a child knew Sill when the young Yale graduate was a frequent guest in her father's home. One of the speakers, Doctor Benjamin Wall, a student of Sill's, later became assistant professor under Professor Sill in the English department. Another assistant was Professor Josiah Royce, a native Californian, then just back from study at Harvard. Milicent Shinn, former editor of "The Overland Monthly", another student, was Professor Sill's literary executor on this coast. She described the eager poet-soul, his earnestness for the real, his impatience with the pretentious. In his poem "Seeming and Being", he set forth his own belief:

"The brave old motto—'Seem not—only be,'—
Would it were set ablaze across the sky."

Modest in the extreme, Sill shunned publicity. Half the large body of his work in "The Atlantic Monthly" appeared anonymously.

His pupils differed in the details of personal description: his eyes were grey; they were hazel; they were violet; but all agreed as to the eager light that shone from them, and his unceasing efforts to interest his students in literature, in painting, in music, and in the beauties of nature.

Charles A. Murdock, a retired San Francisco publisher, brought out a memorial volume in 1887 containing letters from Thomas Bailey Aldrich, then editor of "The Atlantic", Richard Watson Gilder, editor of "The Century", Henry Holt, Daniel Coit Gilman, president of Johns Hopkins University and formerly president of the University of California, and Sill's California friends.

In Lafayette Square, in Oakland, stands a sun dial, its pedestal inscribed with his poem "Life", beginning:

"Forenoon and afternoon and night—"

Equally well known are his poems "The Fool's Prayer" and "Opportunity", while quotations from his longer poems, the beautiful "Hermitage" and the incomparable "Venus of Milo", are known to most readers. At the time of his death critics pronounced Sill of all Americans "the fittest to carry forward the torch of poetry".

For the most part, answering letters for THE BOOKMAN'S Literary Club Service is a reasonably happy occupation; but there is one type of letter which we receive that we'd be glad to answer with an infernal machine sent special delivery. Some dear lady writes in to say that she has to write a *book review* for her club, and could we please tell her something about the book she must review, because she's too busy with her cooking, her babies, or what not less important, to read said book. This is the top notch of absurdity. We don't mind giving all the assistance possible on the ordinary club paper; but, if one sets out to review a book (unless one is a professional book reviewer on certain publications) one must, at least, handle a copy. We despair of convincing those who write for our book review contest that what we want are *criticisms*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of *book reviews*, not reviews themselves, and that 250 words is the limit. The prize next month will be a copy of Irvin Cobb's "Stickfuls". This month's book goes to M. E. Arnold of Jamaica, Long Island.

I cannot agree with Heywood Broun that "Our Little Girl" by Robert A. Simon is insincere and unsympathetic. The author's mockery is tender and the derisive chuckle on his lips is an ingratiating one. I am appalled at this discerning critic who rarely makes such a glaring error, for sincerity is the very quality which pervades the book throughout.

"Our Little Girl" is chiefly entertaining because the prototype of Dorothy Reitz Loamford is to be found in practically every other apartment house which dots Riverside Drive, West End Avenue, and other haunts of the "four thousand". It is the story of a girl, aided and abetted by her adoring relatives, who dramatizes a mediocre vocal ability into a great gift, imagines herself a prima donna, and conducts herself accordingly, including displays of temperament and temper. A clever young journalist falls in love with her, despite his sense of humor, but she disdains him for a more prosperous, socially eligible suitor whom she manages very effectively. Indeed her sense of dramatic values far surpasses her vocal attainments. A schoolmate she had patronized achieves success and consoles her rejected suitor. The book closes with the birth of her son and a vague decision to continue her career, which convinces no one, perhaps not even herself.

All of the characters who surround the girl are handled with a deftness and accuracy which evidences familiarity with the types portrayed. Perhaps the most delightful satire is that which Mr. Simon launches against modern business methods in the campaign which the girl's uncle wages in her behalf, using the advertising methods by which he has become the most successful hat manufacturer.

Stuart Pratt Sherman of Urbana, Illinois, has, for some years, been a mysterious being to us. We began by considering him the most reactionary force (barring possibly Paul Elmer More) in American literary criticism. We have come now to consider him the white hope of the younger generation. Which of us has changed? We hear that he recently decided to remain faithful to his western university and not to join those who inhabit that narrow strip of culture along the east coast of the United States. Mr. Sherman has been one of the few critics to recognize the merits of Sinclair Lewis as an *artist*. Mr. Sherman, an ardent Puritan, is fighting constantly for character and sincerity in American letters. He is broad, tolerant, humane. We have never met him. We are looking forward to that day with much anticipation. The Gossip Shop does not usually recommend books; but if you are interested in the literary attitude in America we can think of no better volume for your perusal than his "The Genius of America". The caricature printed herewith is by Gene Markey, that genial young man from Chicago, whose sardonic pen portraits have recently been collected in a de luxe volume called "Literary Lights".

Reprinted from "Literary Lights"

Stuart P. Sherman

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Heywood Broun tells us that he has written fifteen thousand words of another novel, and is going to be very busy indeed upon it during the next few weeks. We met him at a party given by the George Palmer Putnams to some of their friends, literary and otherwise. Moving pictures of the Pendleton Round Up were shown, revealing various famous authors, led by the intrepid Dr. Traprock, who went to witness that thrilling event last year. Royal Cortissoz, art critic, golfer, etc., explained this reel. Here also were Wallace Irwin and his statuesque wife (Mr. Irwin's new novel is to be published in the autumn). Here was Fannie Hurst, resplendent in a scarlet and silver gown. Here, Frieda Inescort, who is probably one of the most hard working young ladies in New York City. She plays the ingénue in Philip Barry's comedy "You and I" and, in the daytime, assists Mr. Putnam in his publicity department. When asked concerning this phenomenon, she replied, "Why not?" to which there seemed no adequate rejoinder. Alice Brady, who is about to start rehearsals for a special performance of Eugene O'Neill's "Ile", was dazzling in draped and glowing red crêpe. (Our fashion editor wasn't present so we must trust ourself.) Mr. Broun tells us that his young son, who has recently spent some time in Hollywood, found Jackie Coogan delightful and was quite firm in his resolve to stay in Hollywood forever. This, however, would upset Mr. Broun's plans for him. Dr. Traprock arrived late, with the manuscript of new travels under his arm, having been delayed by the fact that his motor collided with a stray pedestrian. Perhaps he has decided to call his next volume "Suburban Explorations on One or Two Wheels".

Katherine Mansfield's last days were brightened by the rather uncommon tribute that had been paid to her in a recent anthology, "The Best Short Stories of 1922", an attempt by Edward O'Brien in collaboration with John Cournos to emulate in England the success O'Brien has had with a similar volume in America. The roll of honor therein published is headed by Katherine Mansfield with ten short stories, all of them printed in periodicals during the year. Next on the list are Stacy Aumonier with eight stories, Elinor Mordaunt with seven, and A. E. Coppard (does America appraise the work of this young writer as it should?) with six. Others who received distinction include Galsworthy, May Sinclair, George Moore, Walpole, D. H. Lawrence, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Thomas Moult, and J. D. Beresford. The compilation is arousing very great interest, and should do much to stimulate enthusiasm for an art form which has been regarded in England too long as a mere entertainment of the moment. Quite unsuccessful hitherto has been any effort to preserve such a form of contribution from the oblivion to which one relegates the magazines that print it, unless the story happened to be by a big-selling novelist. O'Brien and Cournos point out that if all the stories mentioned on their roll were reprinted in book form they would not occupy more space than do six or seven novels of average length, the difference being that the novels seem to be wanted while the short story volumes are not. "In compiling these lists", the editors add, "we have permitted no personal preference or prejudice to consciously influence our judgment." How wickedly the authors who do not find their names tabulated will chortle over the split infinitive!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED